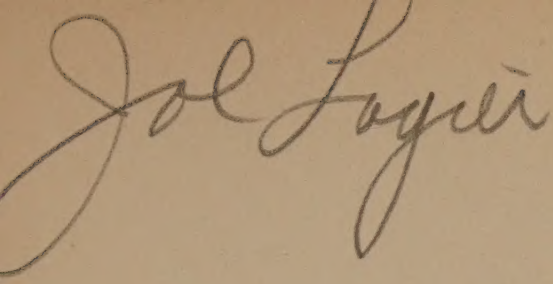
THE HAUNTED HOUSE

HALFORD E. LUCCOCK



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THE HAUNTED HOUSE
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By
HALFORD E. LUCCOCK

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TO MARY

CONTENTS

		PAGE
I.	The Haunted House	9
II.	The Long and Short of It	30
III.	The Intelligence Office	44
IV.	Love Laughs at Locksmiths	56
V.	In an Age of Substitutes	77
VI.	Exclamation Points	97
VII.	The Spring Song	111
VIII.	The Discovery of America	122
IX.	The Old Time Religion	139
X.	Parlor or Living Room?	155
XI.	Calvary and Main Street	169
XII.	A Slice of the Millennium	178
XIII.	Translating the Cross	195
XIV.	Words Frequently Mispronounced	205
XV.	The Impulse of the Resurrection	221
XVI.	In a World of Tangents	232
XVII.	A Matter of Morale	241

I

THE HAUNTED HOUSE

"A number of demons had entered him."—Luke 8. 30 (Moffatt's translation).

EVERY man's mind is a Haunted House. Through it flit the ghosts of vanished yesterdays. Former tenants who once held sway there come back in ghostly form to dispute possession. Mysterious opening and shutting of doors go on within it. The presence of shadowy forms in dark corners disturbs the peace of the house. There have been many haunting and "creepy" ghost stories told since time began, but the most weird and wonderful ghost story is that of the Haunted House in every man's being. For it may truly be said of each of us, as it was said of the strangely afflicted man in the tombs of the gospel story, "A number of demons had entered into him." A number of demons, of spirits, of ghosts, of the forgotten years have entered into us and are a part of us. We are the heirs of all ages,

of all the past both in our individual history and that of the race. And out of its dim distance the ghostly hands of what we used to be reach out and grip us. Within our minds there are several different minds, each with its different characteristics and powers. Our name is Legion, for we are many.

There are not many, even of the sophisticated, whose pulse does not beat hard and fast at a ghost story, a tale of a haunted house. From the time when primitive man crouched in terror before the gruesome apparitions of his own imagination till to-day, when in the flooding light of twentieth century science we still shiver when a ghost story is dramatically told, it has been a theme to hold old men and children spellbound. *"Enter—the ghost"* is a stage direction which always electrifies the audience even when the ghost is himself a product of electricity. When Shakespeare's magic curtain rolls up and discloses the lonely platform at Elsinore and the spirit of the murdered king of Denmark speaks in sepulchral tones of the deep damnation of his taking off, we are held with a spell as potent as that of the Ancient Mariner, even though we know every stage trick in the catalogue. So it is in

Macbeth when the mysterious and frantic knocking at the gate echoes through the castle like the crash of doom. It *is* the crash of doom, the hammering of the supernatural world at the door of guilt. And later, when Banquo's ghost comes unbidden to the banquet, we feel the very wind of the eternal world sweep into the room with him. When Edgar Allan Poe weaves about us the enchanting spell of "The Fall of the House of Usher" we actually hear the ethereal footsteps pattering up and down the halls of the haunted house. Our flesh creeps at the sound. The draughts springing up inexplicably from nowhere and blowing upon our face, the rattling windows, the slamming doors, whisper the incantation—*"This house is haunted!"*

"A number of demons have entered us." Come on a ghost search in the most wonderful and mysterious mansion ever built—the human mind, the home of personality! Its walls are hung with family portraits looking down from the centuries. Ancestral voices echo through the corridors. Slip the key boldly into the lock. You will find dark corners in the house, but it will pay to flash a searchlight into them. You will know yourself better.

In your mind there are three different people, ghosts of former tenants who used to live there, and who in shadowy but influential form still dwell there—the *animal,* the *savage,* and the *child.* The tumult of life comes from the fact that they are usually at cross purposes with the twentieth-century citizen who now holds title to the premises.

In his penetrating book, *The Mind in the Making,* Professor James H. Robinson describes our haunted house:

There are four historical layers underlying the mind of civilized men—the animal mind, the child mind, the savage mind, and the traditional civilized mind. We are all animals and can never cease to be; we were all children at our most impressionable age and can never get over the effects of that; our human ancestors have lived in savagery during practically the whole existence of the race, say five hundred thousand or a million years, and the primitive mind is ever with us; finally, we are all born into an elaborate civilization, the constant pressure of which we can by no means escape.

We may grow beyond these underlying minds, and in the light of new knowledge we may criticize and even persuade ourselves that we have successfully transcended them. But if we are fair with ourselves, we shall find that their hold on us is really inexorable.

In all our reveries and speculations, even the most exacting, sophisticated, and disillusioned, we have three unsympathetic companions sticking closer than a brother and looking on with jealous impatience—our wild, apish

progenitor, a playful or peevish baby, and a savage. We may at any moment find ourselves overtaken with a warm sense of camaraderie for any or all of these ancient pals of ours, and experience infinite relief in once more disporting ourselves with them as of yore.[1]

The ghostly tenants know secret passageways through our personality never clearly located in the light of day. Doors leading down into the cellar of the subconscious open and shut without our deliberate action. Mysterious tunnels leading back to the stone age exist but are not charted. The House is haunted.

It was a quaint complaint of Queen Victoria against Gladstone that he always "addressed her as though she were a public meeting." That sentence tells us more of "the grand manner" of Gladstone than could a whole volume. But, after all, Gladstone was right. Queen Victoria *was* a public meeting. Every person is a public meeting, a turbulent, wrangling, parliamentary assembly, where the Opposition Bench howls and filibusters over every law which the administration puts through. In the intellectual, moral, and emotional clamor

[1] From *The Mind in the Making*, by James H. Robinson, Harper & Brothers, publishers, copyrighted, 1921, in U. S. A.

in some minds the dominant voice of a chairman is never heard nor the sharp pound of the gavel demanding order.

I

The most ancient ghost is the *animal.* He was here first and lived undisputed in the history of the race for a space of time so long that the imagination cannot conceive it. Even the soberest guesses of scientists sound like the more fanciful portions of Hans Christian Andersen. T. H. Huxley guessed that life on the earth had existed for one hundred million years, but that estimate is regarded by some as a product of typical British conservatism. H. G. Wells says in his *Outline of History,* "That the period of time has been vast, that it is to be counted by scores and possibly by hundreds of millions of years, is the utmost that can be said with certainty in the matter. It is quite open to the reader to divide every number in the time diagram by ten or multiply it by two; no one can gainsay him."[2]

This inconceivable stretch of time was, with the exception of a microscopic portion, the

[2] H. G. Wells, *Outline of History.* Reprinted by permission of The Macmillan Company.

period in which the animal mind was developed in the great unfolding of the evolutionary process. The human mind has been a late arrival in the house of life. It is small wonder that with so long a tenancy the animal mind within us has left so active and living a memory. Our physical and mental being, our nerves and muscles, our body and all its cells, remember those millions of years, thrill to their memories, feel their primitive urge in all the emotional reactions of the civilized being. The raw, undisciplined physical instincts and passions do not often come out into the open. They are held on leash in the cellar of the subconscious, but we can hear the ape and the tiger growl.

One of the favorite ghosts in all literature is the departed spirit of Jacob Marley, late partner of Ebenezer Scrooge. We have all heard with shivering emotions the clank of his chain in *The Christmas Carol* as he ascends the stairs from the basement of Scrooge's house. That ghost coming up from the cellar is a very true as well as vivid picture of what goes on in the life of man, when the ghost of the late head of our firm, the animal, with the primitive emotions and instincts, climbs up out of the cellar

of our subconscious mind and struggles for the dominion of the house for his rampant desires. The widespread present study of the subconscious, explorations in what Professor Joseph Jastrow calls "the slums of psychology," have revealed what an ever-present influence and force it is. There is more than "slum" to the subconscious, though psychoanalysis has so far chiefly confined its attention to the ugly and sordid, grotesquely overexaggerating the rôle of the sex instinct as the explanation of nearly the whole of life. Nevertheless, it has emphasized in a way that will prove valuable for moral education the presence of this animal ghost within us.

Here is man's first struggle for dominion—a battle royal for dominion over the physical, animal appetites. For when the animal leaps upon the soul and tears with its tiger claws the spiritual faculties it leaves as woeful devastation in the house as did the escaped gorilla in Poe's gruesome story of "The Murders in the Rue Morgue." There must be a battle on the stairway with the ghost coming up from the cellar, a battle such as Jesus pictured: "No man can enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he will first bind

the strong man; and then he will spoil his house."

The past is heavy. Not merely our own past but the long, dim past of our racial inheritance. It drags. We gain nothing and lose much by disregarding its presence or its power. We are better fortified by clearly seeing it and making the prayer of Sidney Lanier:

"My soul is sailing through the sea
But the Past is heavy and hindereth me.
The Past hath crusted cumbrous shells
That hold the flesh like cold sea-mells
About my soul,
The high waves wash, the high waves roll,
Each barnacle clingeth and worketh dole,
And hindereth me from sailing.

"Old Past let go, and drop i' the sea,
Till fathomless waters cover thee!
For I am living but thou art dead;
Thou drawest back, I strive ahead
The Day to find.
Thy shells unbind! Night comes behind,
I needs must hurry with the wind,
And trim me best for sailing."[3]

But we do not need to bid the past loose its deadening grip by our own hesitant word. We are not left to a lonely struggle in the dark.

[3] From *Poems of Sidney Lanier*, copyright, 1884-1918, by Mary D. Lanier. Published by Charles Scribner's Sons.

If we wrestle with principalities and powers, there are principalities and powers that are on our side. We are heirs of all the ages, but above that and beyond it, we are the heirs of Jesus Christ. In the battle of flesh and soul his energies may nerve our arm, for he too walks the halls of the ancestral home. His wisdom and power will teach us to control, direct, and use our legacy from the animal.

II

The second ghost is the savage—another long-time tenant of the house of the mind. It is a long, long trail from to-day with all the refinements of twentieth-century civilization back to the forests of northern Europe and western Asia, where our savage ancestors roamed with their clubs and spears and bows and arrows. It is so far removed that we may persuade ourselves that all traces of the caveman have gone from us. But that space of time is but as a short week-end compared to the ages during which man was a primeval savage. And his ways of life, his habits of thought are graven deep in the mind of the race. We cannot banish the caveman from

within us by changing our clothes, shaving, putting on spectacles, going to college, or riding in electric trains. He is still in the house. He moves up and down the hallways of the mind and suddenly springs upon us from unknown secret closets in the walls. In some way we must come to some adjustment with him, and that is one of life's chief problems. It cannot be a peace without victory either. A house divided against itself cannot stand.

W. J. Fielding writes: "You do not look as though you had a savage concealed about your person. You are intelligent, good-natured, generous, honest, gentle. Perhaps you never think that the ghost of this savage ancestor within you is an absolute stranger to ethics, one hundred per cent selfish, and anti-social."

Vachel Lindsay in his poem "The Congo" has picturesquely described the survival of the traits, habits, and ways of thinking of the savages of the Congo in their African descendants in America. After describing the antics of a carousing group of Negroes, he catches in them a glimpse of the same traits in their ancestors in the jungle:

"Then I saw the Congo, creeping through the black,
Cutting through the forest with a golden track.

Then along that riverbank
A thousand miles
Tattooed cannibals danced in files;
Then I heard the boom of the blood-lust song
And a thigh-bone beating on a tin-pan gong.
And 'Blood!' screamed the whistles and the fifes of the warriors,
'Blood!' screamed the skull-faced, lean witch doctors,
'Whirl ye the deadly voo-doo rattle,
Harry the uplands,
Steal all the cattle,
Rattle-rattle-rattle-rattle,
Bing.
Boomlay, boomlay, boomlay, BOOM.'"[4]

"Creeping through the black"—yes. But why pick on the black? We can see the savage creeping through the white, just as unmistakably. And through the yellow, the red, and the brown.

The savage mind manifests itself in us partly as the animal mind which we have just described, in the undisciplined appetites and instincts. But beyond that, in the survival of savage modes of thinking, in such primitive forces as taboo and superstition, blind fears and hatreds, we see that savage mind break loose, when the restraints of individual control give way to the mob mind. Then we have

[4] Reprinted by permission of The Macmillan Company; from Vachel Lindsay: "The Congo."

race riots, pogroms, national fevers, and crowd tyrannies.

A manifestation of the savage that does not strike us as having anything savage about it is the ultra-conventionality which abjectly follows the law of the tribe in all the details of life. Like the savage, men of to-day have a deep fear of taboo—of thinking, of saying, of doing, of even feeling in a manner contrary to the particular social or economic or national tribe we belong to. For the savage was the world's ultimate Tory. The tribe decided. He followed. Any experiments in liberalism were met with the simple expedient of extermination. Regulation by the tribe of all the relations of life was one of the essential characteristics of savage life. It is one of the essential characteristics of the many who regard themselves as the most highly civilized to-day.

When we hear the expression, "Savage life in North America," we think of the Indian wandering around the forest with his bow and arrow and tomahawk, in some such manner as is made vivid by the representations in the American Museum of Natural History in New York City. But in the apartment houses around the Museum there is much life going

on just as essentially savage in some particulars. The haunts of savage life in North America are on Fifth Avenue, Michigan Avenue, and Main Street—wherever taboo and tribal decree govern undisputed.

Tribal thinking dominated the savage. The customs of the clan were his substitute for mental self-direction. And in the conventionalized stereotypes which rule so wide a tract of life to-day,

> There we see the Congo
> Creeping through the *white.*

We have magazines which tell us dogmatically "What the well-dressed man will wear" and "What the well-dressed woman will wear." Why not be frank and label their editorial columns, "What the fashionable men and women will *think*"? They outline the fashion taboo and tell just what is forbidden to be worn before five o'clock in the afternoon on pain of social extinction. They might also record the unwritten taboos and tell what is forbidden to be thought or said before it becomes the commonplace of every street corner. "To do anything because others do it," says Stevenson, "and not because the thing is good or kind, or

honest in its own right, is to resign all moral control or captaincy upon yourself, and go post-haste to the devil with the greatest number."

Primitive men and women roam the streets garbed in the latest mode. Of the mechanics of existing and dressing they are remarkably well informed. But their essential outlook on life is remarkably like that of a savage in motives, judgments, passions, and ideas. Civilization to them means tailoring shops, limousines, formal dress for dinner, permanent hair waves. Their family name is Ab—the primitive cave man. Dr. Shailer Mathews says pungently, "They do not count heads as the measure of their success; but if they are men, they count dollars; if women, hearts."

This ghost lays deadening hands on all progress, moral and mental and spiritual. He makes of our religious life an unspiritual fetish worship; he makes our thinking reek with cloudy phrases; he makes our moral life a petrified code of minor taboos.

III

The third ghost patters about the house with tiny feet. *He is the Child you used to be.* He

still roams the house, thank God! For that survival of the child in you—down on your knees and thank heaven, fasting! May Riley Smith has caught the echo of these tiny footfalls:

> "She follows me about my House of Life
> (This happy little ghost of my dead Youth!)
> She has no part in Time's relentless strife
> And laughs at grim Mortality,
> This deathless Child that stays with me—
> (This happy little ghost of my dead Youth!)"

The child spirit is the babbling stream from the hills which keeps the pool of life fresh and free from scum. May it never be choked off! An applicant for a position as child's nurse was once asked, "Have you ever had any experience with children?"

"Sure, ma'am," she answered readily, "I used to be a child myself."

She uttered the profoundest principle of pedagogy. Happy the person who remembers it! George Eliot observes in *The Mill on the Floss* that we would not have loved the natural beauty of the world nearly so much if we had not grown up in it as children. We look out on it not only through our eyes but through the magic lens of memory.

But not all the survivals of the child are allies of the spirit. Some are deadly enemies which bind and gag the soul. Paul recognized this. "When I became a man I put away childish things." "In mind, be men," he pleads. "Be no longer children carried about by every wind of doctrine."

When the child ghost rules the mind, the afflicted person lives in a distorted universe of which he is the center. Sun, moon, and stars, and even Betelgeuse, revolve around his infantile whims. The Italian psychologist, Ferenczi, has marked out the stages of a baby's development which have a striking suggestiveness for adult infants. "At first," he says, "the baby gets some of the things it wants by crying for them. This is the period of *magical hallucinatory omnipotence.*" How many infants stay just there for sixty years—in the period of magical, hallucinatory omnipotence! Especially the *hallucinatory!* That child survival echoing with its petulant whine through years that should be melodious with the song of love and service is one of the ugliest things in the world.

The second period, according to Ferenczi, is when the child secures the things it wants

by pointing to them. "This," he says, "is the period of *omnipotence by the help of magic gestures.*" Magic gestures! How well we know them in adult life! The uplifted hand—"I am now about to speak. Let all the earth keep silence before me." The pointing index finger —"Bring me this," "get me that." And how infinitely weary they make us!

The child mind is characterized also by a blurred inability to make the distinctions necessary to competent judgments. When this survives into adult years the world is shrouded in a fog in which the person is the prey of his chance impressions, his prejudices and fears, and the moral and spiritual progress dependent on clear vision are impossible. Walter Lippmann in his *Public Opinion* has pointed this out in a description carrying a keen thrust of satire:

> The power to dissociate superficial analogies, attend to differences and appreciate variety is lucidity of mind. It is a relative faculty. Yet the differences in lucidity are as extensive, say, as between a newly born infant and a botanist examining a flower. To the infant there is precious little difference between his own toes, his father's watch, the lamp on the table, the moon in the sky, and a nice bright yellow edition of Guy de Maupassant. To many a member of the Union League Club,

there is no remarkable difference between a Democrat, a Socialist, an anarchist, and a burglar. While to a highly sophisticated anarchist, there is a whole universe of difference between Bakunin, Tolstoy, and Kropotkin. These examples show how difficult it might be to secure a sound public opinion about de Maupassant among babies, or about Democrats in the Union League Club.[5]

"In mind be men." The story of Peter Pan, the little boy who never grew up, on the stage, is a delightful comedy. In real life it is a tragedy.

IV

There is another spirit abroad in the House. It is *the Owner*. Nothing can ever quite drive him out, though much may hinder him. We have called our mind an ancestral mansion. So it is. It is Our Father's House. He has always lived there. He always will. His presence is upon us and around us. We bear the impress of his hands.

> "Not in entire forgetfulness,
> Nor yet in utter nakedness,
> But trailing clouds of glory do we come."

The principal ghost in man's house of life—let us say it with all reverence and awe—is the

[5] From *Public Opinion*, by Walter Lippmann, copyright, 1922, by Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc.

Holy Ghost. It is the abiding presence of the Spirit of God in the soul. That spirit may be the order of the house as well as its peace. "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." When we allow that Spirit of God to have free course in us and take control he brings the warring tenants to order and concord. The grace of God in the heart and mind can take the forces of all our ancestral inheritances and not suppress them but give them new direction and employment and make them allies of the soul.

That is a notable prayer in the Psalms, "Unite my heart to fear thy name." That petition goes to the root of the deepest need of a divided life with its discordant forces in conflict. The Spirit of God answers that prayer and fuses the whole personality into one great experience and purpose. He makes life unanimous. It is through the energy of that spirit that men may rise on stepping-stones of their dead selves to higher things.

There is a small religious sect in the United States with a queer-sounding name—"The Holy Ghost and Us." No doubt it is ridiculous as a name for a society, but it enshrines the central truth of the Christian evangel. Life is

distinctly an affair of the Holy Ghost and us. Many spirits have entered us, but one Spirit has remained in us, Lord of them all. "God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father."

II

THE LONG AND SHORT OF IT

He that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off.—2 Peter 1. 9.

SEEING only what is near, we miss the stars. Seeing only what is near, life's fairest landscape becomes a blur. Near-sightedness condemns us to the poverty of half life, missing the deeper distances, the skylines, the blue hills. Beyond the immediate front porch the nearsighted man sees all things through a glass darkly. To him, as to the vision of a child, the larger aspects of life remain "a buzzing, blooming blur." Moffatt's translation of the words of Jesus in the King James version of Matthew, "If your eye be single," is "If your eye be *generous,* the whole of your body will be illumined." Now, eyes that see only what is near are stingy eyes. They report only a small segment of the human scene. A generous eye says to the mind, "Here it is. Take it all, long and short, far and near!"

In that sense Robert Browning had the most

generous eyes ever set as windows before a human mind. They were very abnormal in their physical construction and power. Few people, if any, have ever possessed exactly the same combination of eyes. They were not twins; they hardly seemed to belong to the same family. Yet their team work and power of seeing minutely both the near and the far make them symbols of the ideal grasp of these two aspects of life—the immediate foreground and the remote background.

What a theme for a critic of literature, or a poet—Robert Browning's eyes! How they could catch the fleeting beauty of a dew-pearled hillside at dawn! How clearly they could see down the twisted lanes of human character and motive! How they could peer through the heavy veil of the material world to the very face of God! A pair of eyes in ten million!

It is noteworthy that Browning's eyes were unique physically as well as spiritually. William Lyon Phelps tells us of their strange mating and strange powers:

> Browning's eyes were peculiar, one having a long focus, the other very short. He had the unusual accomplishment (try it and prove) of closing either eye with-

out squinting, and without any apparent effort, though sometimes in the street in strong sunshine, his face would be a bit distorted. He did all his reading and writing with one eye, closing the long one as he sat down at his desk. He never wore glasses, and was proud of his microscopic eye. He often wrote minutely, to show off his power. When he left the house to go for a walk he shut the short eye and opened the long one, with which he could see an immense distance.[1]

Browning's eyes could look out on any scene and report both the long and short of it. They were a strange couple—a microscopic and a telescopic eye united in the holy bonds of matrimony! What a joy it would be to shut off our microscopic eye and open the telescopic one when we wished to look at the mountains and apply it *vice versa,* when we wanted to read. We could then say truly:

> "I am monarch of all I survey.
> My right there is none to dispute,"

for nothing, certainly, far or near would escape us.

Such team work of far and near sight would give to the inner eye of the mind an ideal vision of the world. What a full-orbed personality

[1] From *Browning: How to Know Him,* by William Lyon Phelps. Copyright, 1915. Used by permission of the publishers, The Bobbs-Merrill Company.

such an outlook on life would give! So often we have only one kind of vision. We look out on our world either with a microscopic eye, keen for immediate details, blind to remoter factors and consequences, or with a telescopic eye which leaves out the foreground. With either alone the world is out of drawing. We either look up at the stars and fall into the ditch, or avoid both the stars and the ditch. It is a tragedy either way.

We are descendants of one-eyed Cyclops. The twentieth-century Cyclops throws his one eye like a burning glass on his restricted fields of interest, or on the things peculiarly congenial to his temperament. The rest of the world is a blank, a vacuum. The business world knows Mr. Cyclops well. His mastery of detail is matched only by his energy. He can make two orders grow where only one grew before. The Cyclops Manufacturing Company is a marvel of efficiency. Its overhead, cost-accounting and labor turnover all come under the gleaming eye of Mr. Cyclops himself. But that eye has a fixed focus. It is riveted to that little world of production and sales as immovably as a searchlight employed to illuminate an advertising sign on Broadway. It never

swings up into the sky peering into the heavens. It never looks down into the street on the multitude. Spiritual aspirations and wide human sympathies are both shut out of the life of the man who sees only what is near.

Or perhaps it is Professor Cyclops with his eye fixed on remote speculation, but quite helpless to find his way across the street. No doubt you will think of the Rev. Dr. Cyclops sweeping the sky with telescopic eye to the neglect of the small midgets of humanity in his parish which require a closer focus. Or what an impressive figure Senator Cyclops makes! How eloquent his rendition of Washington's Farewell Address, warning against entangling alliances! How satisfying it must be to the great man to resemble Washington in one particular, at any rate. His microscopic statesmanship can take into its ken a whole state such as Massachusetts or Missouri, but it cannot span the Atlantic. Yet with what impassioned patriotism he glows when the Rivers and Harbors Appropriations are at stake or a federal building for his district hangs in the balance!

It is a finely balanced mind and spirit which sees both near and far. It is a complete man

to whom the present duty and the ultimate ideal are both visible and to whom both general truths and individual people appeal. In a supreme way Jesus saw both the background and the foreground. He never lost sight of the heavens. He was never so immersed with the task of the moment that he forgot the other sheep in the distance. Looking out on the multitude, he was touched with compassion. He was never so intent on truth that he forgot that it was supper time and that the crowd was hungry. What tender, loving observation he had of the details of daily life! What sensitive sympathy which could pick out of a passing throng the one person who needed him most, as he did with the woman who touched the hem of his garment!

I

It is essential for life's balance and service to keep our power of seeing clearly the *foreground* of the moment and situation. Dr. Richard C. Cabot tells of a man being carried into a hospital for an operation. Nurses and doctors were deeply concerned; so deeply concerned, in fact, that no one had time to notice that the man was clamoring for a drink of

water. Of course he needed an operation and was going to have one! Meanwhile his immediate need was a drink. But that was a detail in the foreground that no one noticed.

That is a picture of very common neglect. Occupied with what we regard as important concerns, we are blind to the personalities in front of us. We look at them or, rather, *through* them as though they were transparent, made of glass. We are like the man in the gospel who was being cured of his blindness. He reached a stage where he saw men as trees walking. We have the same eye trouble. We look at people as though they were trees; that is, as though they were mere parts of the landscape. A man will size up the contents of an office as "four desks, three filing cabinets and two stenographers." There is a phrase which has become stereotyped and cold and usually mechanical, "What can I do for you?" It can be as harsh as a worn phonograph record. Nevertheless, such an unconscious attitude which says to everyone, "What can I do for you?" is essential to the spirit of Christ.

When we are blind to the *foreground,* we lose sight of the immediate step necessary. That is why so much of the social teaching of

Christianity dissolves into thin air. Christianity is a social ideal; but we are content often to state the ideal and take no immediate step in its direction. We publish the "Social Creed of the Churches" on neat little cards and offer them for distribution for ten cents a hundred. But we do not bother much about a garment workers' strike where our approval of an eight-hour day logically demands that we take off our coats and give our words some meaning. We do not even bother to learn what a shopmen's strike, or a coal strike is about; at least, not until the coal in our own cellar begins to get uncomfortably low!

So it is with the problem of peace. Christianity is not only an ideal of international peace but also a means of reaching it. The immediate step needed is an agreement on definite actions, devising machinery for effective protest; yes, for effective *refusal,* to take part in war. When that is done the world may believe that the church means something. Until that is done, it will listen with complacency to all the Christmas anthems ever sung.

In the foreground of every church is its family of children—the Sunday school. But the Sunday school is frequently only an ill-cared-

for stepchild of the church. This is very strange, for Christianity's chief reliance is on education. The church as a rule sees the far landscape of Christian ideals. But upon the immediate educational task which is right at its feet it has no clear focus. We blindly translate Jesus' great word, "Suffer little children to come unto me," into a shorter form and say in effect, "*Suffer,* little children!" And we see to it that they *do* suffer from crude and inadequate educational processes which have no right to the name. When the child escapes from this rough handling and utterly inadequate school of religion and squirms out of our hands we feel deeply injured and perplexed. The trouble comes from overlooking the fundamental and immediate task which the church has in the religious education of its children. Let us suggest a standing want advertisement:

: Wanted: By The Church of Christ, Main :
: Street, Everywhere: A Microscopic Eye :

II

What shall we say of the need for the far-seeing eye adjusted to eternity and the realities

of the spiritual world? It is that eye for which the apostle is pleading in our text. It is that far-seeing eye which the world needs to-day and is pleading for in groans that cannot be uttered. It is that telescopic eye for which, mutely and unconsciously, every superficial, fragmentary and unfulfilled life is pleading.

"No man's work is greater than his soul." To-day the soul is suffering from low visibility. The atmosphere is so charged with the coal dust of commercialism, and the fog of bewilderment that the background of spiritual values is obscured.

There is a current phrase frequently used—"I see by the morning paper." That is all some people ever see by. It is their only eye. Now, not everything in this world can be seen by the morning paper! What queer selections from the great pageant of life the morning paper makes! How little it records the noble ideals of millions! How it passes over the obscure heroisms and loyalties of lives outside of the spot light! But just those very gaps exist in the world of large numbers of people buried like moles in newspapers and whose sole organs of vision are the headlines.

A. G. Gardiner has summed up this lack of

the deeper understanding of life very keenly in a description of Lord Northcliffe:

Lord Northcliffe has a passion to be powerful and the means to be powerful, but he does not know what to be powerful about. His career is thronged with thrilling incidents, but it has no direction. It is like the wild night-drive on which Tony Lumpkin charioted his mother. It was full of sensations and adventures, but at the end Mrs. Hardcastle found she had only careered round and round the domestic pond.

Our need is

> "To see
> Life, not the daily coil, but as it is
> Lived in its beauty in eternity,
> Above base aim, beyond our miseries;
> Life that is speed and color and bright bliss,
> And beauty seen and strained for, and possessed
> Even as a star forever in the breast."[2]

It has been pointed out that the business man must have two common qualities in an uncommon degree. He must see truly and act decisively. He may be compared to the painter, who must have equal truth of vision and of hand. The business man who has only the first quality is a dreamer; he who has only the second is a blunderer.

[2] From "Poems" by John Masefield. Reprinted by permission of The Macmillan Company.

In our world there are, of course, many dreamers. But who shall number the legion of blunderers—those who act without seeing?

We need a vision of the purpose and the beauty and the power of life. Emerson says that we go into the garden Sunday morning and look across the fields to the distant woods. But on Monday morning we do not see the woods; we peep after weeds and bugs. Paraphrasing Wordsworth we might say, "The bugs are too much with us"—

The deep thing the matter with the world is the absence of an ideal and spiritual background to the picture. It is when the ideal drops out of our minds that we become the helpless victims of the misfortunes and hard conditions of life. Professor Hocking in his book on *Morale* has well stressed what great dependence the soldier has on idealism if he is to keep his spirit alive:

> He is more exposed than any other human being to the insistence of the material facts, and so to a sort of disillusion and fatalistic slump. The foreground of his life is apparently hard-headed, realistic, sordid; the feelings and sentiments that were in evidence during the recruiting campaign have retired to the background. He finds himself summoned to "pack up his troubles in the old kit-bag" and if he is wise he does so; but the philos-

ophy of "smile" hardly meets all his requirements; he recognizes it for what it is, less a philosophy than a life-preserver.[1]

A "life preserver" will not take the place of a philosophy or of a religious faith which looks out on life and finds there a great, purposeful God. We have concentrated so much on the superficialities of the immediate foreground of our activities that we lose the sustaining vision of life's larger significance.

Robert Owen once came to Ralph Waldo Emerson and told him of his elaborate scheme of the world's mistakes and the resulting evils. To Owen the five fundamental evils in the world were, religious perplexities, money difficulties, disappointment in love, intemperance, and anxiety for offspring. "You are very external with your evils, Mr. Owen," said Emerson, "let me give you some real mischiefs. *Living for show, losing the whole in the particular, indulgence of vital power in trivialities.*"

With Emerson's so-called mischiefs in mind look at that much of the world which you can see from your front and back window and

[1] From *Morale and Its Enemies*. Reprinted by permission Yale University Press.

judge whether he does not penetrate rather deeply into the weaknesses of life when the background of spiritual values is left out.

Jesus painted the background toward which the eye of man should look in his portrayal of the soul's relation to God, in his valuation of life and God's purpose in the world.

The great enemy of religion in our day is secularism, that false standard of values which takes the life of the moment and of the senses as the ultimate reality. Against this practical atheism we must set the moral idealism of Jesus. When we have his background in our picture we shall know with Browning that "Life is a greater and grander thing than any fool's illusion about it."

III

THE INTELLIGENCE OFFICE

The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.—Luke 19. 10.

IN his *Mosses from an Old Manse,* Nathaniel Hawthorne has a searching story entitled "The Intelligence Office." He tells of a mysterious stranger who came to a colonial seaport town of New England and opened an office for the recovery of lost things. He offered to find for any one of the villagers anything which he had lost. After a period of aloofness, one by one the people of the village made their way to him, many under the cover of night. Some, of course, came to recover lost money; others for more difficult things, more elusive to recover when once gone. A woman came to him seeking her lost youth. One man was looking for his lost innocence. He had made the bitter discovery that

> "The tender grace of a day that is dead
> Will never come back to me."

Another was looking for the lost feeling of joy in the morning. One woman came at night seeking to recover a lost name, that had once gleamed fair but had been trampled in the dust.

What a searching parable of life!

What if there were such an office—how we would flock to it, even those whom we would least suspect of having lost anything!

It is appalling how many things are lost in a great city in the course of a year. More than a million articles a year pass through the "Lost and Found" department in New York city. Go into the "Lost and Found" office of any street-car system and you will find an assortment of *human impedimenta* beyond the imagination to conceive. There are hundreds of umbrellas. Of course any intelligent person could lose an umbrella. You were there looking for an umbrella yourself! But in addition to the umbrellas, I noticed a bass drum on my last trip. You would think that one would sort of miss a bass drum if he had left it anywhere! There were a whole flock of baby carriages, stacks of pocketbooks, and very suggestive were a collection of lost Bibles. In fact, everything was there except

the things that ought to have been there—lost heads! This massive pile of things is only a symbol of the other losses in a city in a year; things so intangible that they cannot be heaped together in piles. It is significant that Winston Churchill's novel called *The Far Country,* does not tell of a boy who went away into the far country of profligate dissipation, but unfolds the more subtle story of a man of fine, God-fearing New England ancestry, who in the practice of law in a great city has had his high ideals and standards blunted and whittled away and pared down. The losses in a year in a city are heaviest in lost ideals. Think of the lost church letters, and the lapsed purposes which they represent! Think of the warm sympathies petrified!

What a boon Hawthorne's intelligence office would be for all of us! Here is something very like it—"Jesus of Nazareth passeth by." No aspect of his many-sided life is more fascinating than to watch him as the Great Discoverer of lost things for those who crossed his path.

The life of Jesus of Nazareth is the greatest detective story ever told or written. Follow him down the road a bit, and see the Great Recoverer at work. For Peter he finds his *lost*

peace. You remember that early morning twilight scene on the Sea of Galilee where Peter, in the depths of shame and despair, meets his risen Master. And as Jesus, without any hot and bitter reproach looks into his eyes and asks him that simple question, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?" peace returns to the heart of Peter, like the turning of a tide. For a woman who had *lost her fair name* he restored it once more untainted and pure. "Thy sins which are many are forgiven thee, go and sin no more." For the wearied invalid waiting at the pool at Bethsaida, he recovered *lost hope.* Do you know what it is to hope for a thing through the years meeting disappointment after disappointment, till hope dwindles down to nothing but a heartache? Then you can tell just how that waiting man at the pool felt at each repeated failure to be cured when the opportunity came. Then Jesus comes that way. And that hope which was utterly gone is found and restored. He recovered and brought back to men that elusive thing—*lost courage.* The disciples were meeting after the crucifixion behind closed doors, beaten in spirit. Their courage had all oozed out at the finger tips. Then Jesus came, the doors being

shut and said, "Peace be unto you." Courage came back like new blood leaping through their veins.

He walks our streets to-day—up Broadway, down Main Street, across City Hall Square. He stops in front of us with a wistful glance. The Best Seeker is at our service. Usually we think of our text in connection with the limitless extent of God's love. May we think now of Christ's intensive search for things in individuals, for those capacities and those powers which are ours by right and which we ought to have but which have slipped away from us.

I

The major search of the Great Restorer was for *lost harmony between man and God.* He stood before the blind beggar at Jericho and restored his sight. What he did was to bring the inner nerve of the eye into restored harmony with the outer world of light. Christ stands before each one of us to recover for us the harmony between the soul and God. Sometimes the harmony is lost in the sense that it used to be present and has slipped away, as when a shooting star drops out of its orbit and

vanishes. Sometimes harmony is lost only in the sense that it has never been achieved, just as the desert waste has never been brought into the right harmony with the sky and the climate in order that its possibility of fruitfulness might be developed.

The deep explanation which Jesus made of what was wrong with the world was that it was out of harmony with the will of God. Consequently, he did not bother much with tinkering a little bit here and there on the political or economic situation. He did not pay much attention to those things. He sought to lay bare and cure the fundamental ills. A derelict ship which is out of its course with a broken compass may need many things. Unquestionably, it needs new paint. It needs new brass rails. But it needs one thing supremely —to get back into harmony with the stars, to establish a response to the heavens on the part of its steering gear, so that it may find the path to its desired haven. A derelict life has many needs, but underlying them all it needs just what the ship needs—harmony with the stars. It needs response to God and those laws of God which are the pilot stars for the navigation of life.

Jesus restored harmony with God. In his revelation of God's true nature he uncovered the sky. His incarnation of the love of God is the magnetic pull of the moral and spiritual world drawing all men unto him in a restored sonship.

But harmony with God is not a relation which can be achieved once for all and forgotten. You may hoist a flag and nail it to the mast of your ship and let it stay there for months without bothering about it. But you cannot nail fast the compass if you expect to land anywhere except on the rocks. When you navigate, your harmony with the heavens must be recovered by fresh observations and experiment daily.

It is interesting on shipboard to see the old process of "shooting the sun," by which the ship's charts and clocks are checked up every day at noon, by taking a fresh observation of the ship's position with reference to the sun. Yesterday's time was true for yesterday. It may or may not be true for to-day. Thus every detail of the ship's life is brought into new harmony with the sun. That is a very suggestive process—"Shooting the Sun." How long since you have done it? How long since you

have brought your present course into harmony with heaven by a fresh observation of the will of God as revealed in Christ? The largest cause of life's shipwrecks is that the compass is packed away in the trunk.

II

Restored harmony means *refound joy.* And how silently joy slips away from us! Joy depends on harmony just as melody depends on the instrument being in tune. Melody does not depend on things. The strings of the piano may all be there, painfully there, yet the melody cannot be captured unless the strings are in right relation. So joy never comes from the mere possession of *things.* It must come from our relationships and adjustments to things and to people. That is what makes joy different from pleasure. You can get pleasure from things, from an automobile for instance. But you cannot get joy from a joyride! Joy may not mean an unruffled disposition of happy calm. We have never observed that people with an unruffled disposition ever amounted to very much. Those who are always marked by a calm like that of a pool on a quiet evening have not, as a rule, contributed much

to human welfare. That calm frequently springs from indifference. A great many people never get worried about things because they do not care very much about them. Their hearts are calm because they have congealed. Many people never get mad because they have not force enough in their personality. They flatter themselves on keeping their temper when, as a matter of fact, they have very little temper to keep. It takes a real man or woman to get thoroughly "mad," that is, blazingly indignant over injustice to and oppression of other people!

The professional Pollyanna is one of the most terrible bores on earth. We have never quite decided whether the female of the species is more deadly than the male or not. But both are utterly tiresome, as tiresome as the stereotyped smile on the face of a lifeless painted doll.

The joy which Christ gives and recovers is deeper than the superficial conditions of life. A man's life may be agitated on the surface; he may be deeply concerned over many things; yet in the depths of his heart and mind there may run deep currents of joy; just as the waves at the top of the sea may lash with fury and

send spray in every direction, yet down below there is a strong, serene running of the tide unaffected by all the agitation on the surface.

We let go of our heritage of joy too easily. We become busy here and there and worried here and there, and it is gone. We live too much on the northeast side of our religion, exposed to the cold winds but not facing the tropical warmth of the presence of him who came that our joy might be full.

To what charlatans people go to recover the joy which has slipped from their lives! To the beauty parlors, as though happiness could be put on like a coat of paint. Joy is like the bloom of a good complexion. It must always be put on from within; never from without. To-day men and women are crowding to the parlors where is dished out what Joseph Fort Newton calls "bootleg religion"; that is, weak substitutes for the legitimate thing of Christianity. We rush to New Thought only to discover if we are keen enough that what is really "thought" is not new, and what is new is not "thought." Crowds flock to the mediums and to spirits that chirp and mutter.

The Son of man is come to seek and to save your joy, to bring your life into full harmony

with him. The restoration of joy by Jesus is a thoroughgoing thing. He comes to our hearts as to an abandoned garden. He does not seek to restore it by artificially tying on fruit and flowers to the trees. He makes them grow. He brings about the conditions in life out of which joy comes as naturally and inevitably as a rose springs up out of a well-nurtured and well-watered garden.

In that respect Jesus differs profoundly from many others who are continually urging us to "cheer up." Jesus was not any superficial organizer of an "International Smile Week," after the childish manner of many of us to-day. Whenever Jesus told men to be of good cheer, he always gave them a reason for rejoicing. He says to a helpless cripple, "Be of good cheer." Immediately his legs received strength and he walked. He had a reason to feel cheerful. That is always the message of religion. In the loving purpose of God, in the omnipotence of God, is the lasting reason for courageous joy. The foundation of joy expressed in the Old Testament is the right one: "The Lord God omnipotent reigneth, let the earth rejoice." That is enough to rejoice over!

When God enters a life he plants a garden

and tills it, and shines on it with a warmth which brings forth fruit. There is a great group of mountains and valleys in the State of Colorado so majestic in their grandeur that they merit the name "The Garden of the Gods." But that garden cannot compare with a more wonderful one in a more wonderful place even than Colorado. Here is the authentic garden of God—"The fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance."

IV

LOVE LAUGHS AT LOCKSMITHS

Bring my soul out of prison.—Psalm 142. 7.

OUR text touches the most fascinating theme that has ever gripped the imagination of man—the romance of escape. All through the long history of literature, all the way from the time when Blind Homer held his audience enthralled as he sang the hairbreadth escapes of Ulysses, down to the days when we follow the exploits of Sherlock Holmes with bated breath, the story of an escape either from jail or peril has held the eager interest of all men. In these present days thousands have been thrilled by that almost unbelievable narrative of an escape from Russia entitled *Beasts, Men, and Gods.* It is just a plain, straightforward narrative of a long pilgrimage, fighting against all the forces of men and nature, but it takes hold of the elemental struggle for life within us and stirs us with a fresh admiration for the unexplored

powers of human nature. The romance of escape enlists the sympathy of all men, for it is a fundamental epic theme. With breathless suspense we watch the nerve, the wit, the faith, and endurance of one man pitted against steel and iron, stone and overwhelming numbers.

One of the most moving pages in the whole story of the Civil War is that which tells of the escape from Libby Prison in Richmond, of Colonel Rose and one hundred and eight other Union soldiers. Tunneling down from a fireplace on the second floor, through the walls until they came eight feet below the foundation of the building, another tunnel was dug under the prison yard about one hundred feet to the outside of the wall. The only tools the men had were a broken fire shovel and sharp pieces of wood. All the dirt had to be carried back through the tunnel in a little frying pan and the digging had to be done with guards constantly passing. To the dangers of discovery were added the horrors of an army of rats. But finally the men crawled through the tunnel one by one and passed within three hundred feet of six armed guards, who, of course, would have shot them had they been discovered. Then, even though out of prison,

they were in the very center of the Confederate capital, many miles from the Union lines. At last fifty-five reached Washington in safety.

In our own time one among many such stories is the heroic adventure of poor Pat O'Brien in that gripping book of his, *Outwitting the Hun.* Captured by the Germans after having fallen from an aeroplane, he was being taken by four guards on his discharge from the hospital, to prison. Seizing the opportunity of the distracted attention of the guards in a fleeting moment, he flung himself head foremost through a railroad car window and, though badly crippled by the fall, got up and was out of sight before the train was stopped. From then on for ninety days he made his way through a hostile country, traveling only at night, living on roots and leaves for the most part, picking his way by the stars, tempted a score of times to give up the bitter struggle, but forcing himself on by an almost superhuman will. Finally, he reached the border of Holland only to find a high impassable electrically-charged wire barrier. With bruised and bleeding hands it took him a whole night to dig under this barrier. But his long, hard fight was won. With what a depth of

heart feeling did he make the prayer, over and over, "Bring my soul out of prison."

In a different and even more difficult realm, what a beat of the pulse the story of Helen Keller brings! If you have never read the story of her life, you have a rare spiritual experience in store. The story of that battle, a truly divine struggle against the iron bars of blindness and deafness, a human spirit walled up in an almost impassable stone stronghold, is one of the great heroic *sagas* of the human race.

An inseparable part of that heroic story is the genius and skilled sympathy of Anne Sullivan Macy, who forged the keys which let the little prisoner out. Mary Twain once said that the two greatest "men" of the nineteenth century were Napoleon Bonaparte and Helen Keller. But with all his genius, what a comic-opera soldier Napoleon makes, compared with that heroine who battled with the blackest darkness that ever settled on a human soul and overcame it!

There is a very deep reason for the unfailing interest in this romance of escape, for in a real sense it is the story of the human race in its struggle against jail doors. The long history

of man is the story of an escape from jail, overcoming the prison walls of physical forces, the emancipation of the mind and spirit from the powers of ignorance and fear that inclosed them. Only in modern times have we realized what a long, heroic battle there was between powers of nature and the dawning mind of men. The deep, unconscious prayer that underlay every endeavor of primitive men was this: "Bring my soul out of prison." History is the divine answer of the Spirit of God to the spirit of man. Centuries of beating at jail doors are expressed in William H. Carruth's familiar eight lines:

"A fire-mist and a planet,
A crystal and a cell,
A jellyfish and a saurian,
And caves where the cave-men dwell.
Then a sense of law and beauty,
A face turned from the clod—
Some call it evolution,
And others call it God."[1]

This deep prayer of the psalmist, uttered in a time of distress and despair, when the walls of adverse circumstances were steadily closing on him, pictures the largest service which re-

[1] From "Each in His Own Tongue," by William H. Carruth. Courtesy of G. P. Putnam's Sons, publishers, New York and London.

ligion can do for men. It brings jail delivery to the soul. By the grace of God, the enterprise of life may be just that—a gripping human and divine romance of overcoming prison gates and walls, the liberation of the soul from forces that chain it. The highest experiences of human life have been of those men and women who have had that liberation and who can make their own a song of thanksgiving of another psalmist—"Thou hast set my feet in a large room."

I

This prayer is a cry from the dungeon of our animal inheritance. It is a call for freedom from the dominion of physical appetite and sin. Our physical constitution and instincts do not necessarily make a prison. They are just so much wonderful building material. A pile of marble may be built into either a home or a jail. The divine plan is to build our physical being, with all of its powers and capabilities, into a home of the soul, lighted by a divine spark. But men have often discarded the blueprints of God and have built it into a jail in which the soul withers and dies in a dark cell. Paul's desperate cry, "Who will de-

liver me from the body of death?" is one of those great words which one man speaks for the whole race.

It is the first great step toward escape when we realize that the dominion of appetite is a prison. For it is frequently accounted a palace, a stately pleasure house as opulently furnished as that of Kubla Khan, spread with silks and studded with jewels. But disguise the prison as we may, it is still a prison. In our sunlit moments we realize it. Visions will come to all men like that of Bonnivard, "The Prisoner of Chillon," who climbed one day to the top of his prison tower and looked out on the living green, the blue of the lake and the white summits of the mountains. So our moments of clear vision are the top of the prison tower from which we look out on a spiritual quality of life and know it as the soul's true country.

Sometimes men are thrown in jail by a sudden arrest, by a sudden temptation which swoops down on them like a hawk. More often their prison house is the slow building of a forbidding barrier—habit.

Habits of thought which make new excuses for old sins forge new bars for the prison of

the dominion of the flesh. New shackles are being forged for a large number of people in the present popularity of the cult of "freedom from cramping custom and outgrown morality." It is a strange irony that every so-called "new freedom" from inconvenient moral restraints means the welding of a new chain, a strengthening of the bars which hold the soul in subjection.

An easy and superficial view of God which is nothing more than a sentimental caricature makes the descent into license easy. The real theology of large numbers to-day is well expressed by Omar Khayyám:

> . . . "Some there are who tell
> Of one who threatens he will toss to Hell
> The luckless Pots he marred in making—Pish!
> He's a Good Fellow, and 'twill all be well."

Not all convicts are profligates by any means. Many are simply in prison in the sense that they are creatures of the senses. They depend absolutely on what they can eat and drink and see and hear for the whole of life. Their spiritual faculties are atrophied.

H. G. Wells has summed up this large class of people with a very expressive name when he

calls them the "God-sakers," meaning the people who are always exclaiming, "For God's sake, let's do something!" When they are not going somewhere or coming back from somewhere, or doing something, life is an empty and aching blank. Without resources in themselves they are dependent on the gratification of some one of the senses. It never occurs to them that life may have any deeper resources of enjoyment.

So far we have been thinking merely of the plight of the human spirit. But the chief point of interest in the story of an escape is the *escape*. And that is the chief point of interest in the story as God writes it.

Paul answers his own question, "Who will deliver me from the body of death?" His triumphant answer is, "I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord." Peter's escape from jail affords us a very true picture of the means of escape of the human spirit from the dominion of the flesh. An angel came and let him out. That is always God's method. The first thing that was necessary was the angel to awaken him. The first step in our escape from appetite is the awakening of conscience, an inspiration at the awakening touch of the

Spirit of God. After the awakening came the cooperation of the angel and the man, and soon he was on the street. It is by the cooperation of our will with the energizing, empowering Spirit of God that we vault over the wall, conquering the guard set to watch us, and leap on our way to freedom.

In these days when we are so much occupied, as we should be, with social vision, with the preaching of the kingdom of God as a social ideal, there is danger that we may slur over a fundamental message of the gospel:

> "He breaks the power of cancelled sin,
> He sets the prisoner free."

Those lines of the old hymn are a romance of escape, but they are no fiction.

To everyone fighting temptation this is, thank God, in the stark, literal meaning of the much-abused phrase, "gospel truth." There follow in the train of Christ, as the exalted language of the *Te Deum* portrays it, the glorious company of apostles, prophets, saints and martyrs lifting their chorus of praise. But we ought not to forget that there also follow in his train a great and glorious company of escaped convicts. Vachel Lindsay was not

mad but speaks forth the words of truth and soberness when he describes one part of that company in his "General William Booth Enters Heaven."

"Booth led boldly with his big bass drum,
'Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?'
The saints smiled gravely and they said, 'He's come.'
'Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?'
. . . . . .
Walking lepers followed rank on rank,
Lurching bravos from the ditches dank;
Drabs from the alley and drug-fiends pale,
Minds still passion-ridden, soul-powers frail!
Vermin-eaten saints with moldy breath,
Unwashed legions with the ways of death.
. . . It was queer to see
Bull-necked convicts with that land made free,
. . . drabs and vixens in a flash made whole.
Gone was the weasel head, the snout, the jowl,
Sages and sibyls now and athletes clean,
Rulers of empires and of forests green."[2]

That language is not too strong a picture of the enabling grace of God. The Divine Love laughs at locksmiths.

I have missed most of the sights on this earth that men call great. I have never seen the Matterhorn nor the Taj Mahal. I have never even seen the Yellowstone nor the Yosemite. But I

[2] Reprinted by permission of The Macmillan Company.

have seen the first wonder of the world, the fairest sight earth holds up to heaven. I have seen God lead men out of jail.

II

Every soul must break out of a prison of things. We are dungeoned by possessions, smothered by a cutter of merchandise, the life flattened out by the accumulative instinct of selfishness. The prisonhouse of selfishness is the common jail of mankind, caging men in the little cell of personal advantage.

There recently died in the village of New Hartford, Connecticut, an elderly man of wealth who was born and lived all his life in the same room in which he died. The newspaper account of his death stated that he had never slept in any other room and always had a great dislike to making any changes and grew angry when a new wallpaper or a new carpet was suggested. However broad may have been his interests, his actual physical life was spent in a one-celled universe. That life in a single room is a fair picture of the walled-up life of millions within the cage of selfish absorption; their contented, chained souls

pace up and down as restlessly and uselessly as a grizzly bear doing his endless march behind the bars of his cage in the zoo. Frequently selfish lives are not a parade up and down one cell only, but before a tier of adjoining cells. Their interest bulges out to take in other members of their family, their relatives, and even the neighbors as far as three blocks in all directions.

Now, of course, it is perilously easy to inveigh against selfishness, and much exhortation against it is vague and confusing. We cannot live on earth as disembodied spirits. We must have things. It is one evidence of the sanity of Jesus that he always realized that "Your heavenly father knoweth ye have need of these things." More than that, even with the most unselfish of motives, unless we approach life with a definite equipment, with some skill and some means of service, our contribution will be fragmentary and weak. We need a self-regard which will equip and sustain us for worth-while service. But that does not mean the absorption of our whole time and strength and money in that task. Our home, our business, our personal interests ought to be a haven from which we start equipped for a

cruise of service, not a drydock in which we are interned for the duration of life.

What a wastage of life there is when the shades of the prison house of selfishness descend and the vision splendid is shut from view! The magnificence of the jail does not affect the tragedy of confinement. Last summer the attention of the country was fixed for thirty days on a gold mine in Jackson, California, in which forty-seven miners were entombed. Every effort possible was made to dig them out before death overtook them, but when finally the rescuers tunneled a way to them they were all dead. There they were shut up in one of the richest rooms in the world, with the walls and floor and ceiling literally lined with gold! Their prison house was worth millions; yet in it they gasped their lives away!

That tragedy has a close parallel in the spiritual world, where the life of the soul has been snuffed out in a gold mine. Nor does it take the fabulous wealth of a gold mine to hold the soul a prisoner. A man's soul may be just as irretrievably lost among the cracker barrels of a corner grocery store. Two recent satirists, in a remarkable volume entitled *The Undertak-*

er's Garland, have described the spiritual famine in which many are starved to death. A business man is etched as follows:

> His purpose in his barren existence of severity and application, in ignoring alike the questioning mind and the flaming imagination, was simply to make something cheap and sell it to somebody dear—a pasteboard suit-case, an alfalfa cigarette, a paraffin chocolate bar. And to this end he set thousands of his fellows to the most monotonous and exhausting labor.

The great emphasis of Jesus as he sought to lead men out of jail into freedom was that life was more than meat. That great truth can be heard through his discourses like the constant roll of the sea. We hear it in the parable of the rich fool, in the story of the rich young ruler, in the parable of the talents, and the good seed choked by thorns. That familiar teaching should echo and reecho to-day above the noise of the market-place.

We frequently hear church workers speak of the ministry of the church to "shut-ins." We have been speaking here of a very pathetic class of "shut-ins" who need a vigorous ministry. They are not dear old ladies or patient invalids who never get out of the house. They are the prison inmates who

have built their own dungeons by their selfish absorption. The business of the church is not to give them glasses of jelly, or smooth words, or comforting prayers, or any other kind of flattering attention. The church has done far too much of that sort of thing. Far less often than we should have we declared in plain words to the selfish and respectable people around us: "You are locked up in jail. Your spirit is in prison. In Christ's name, come out!" Such spirits in prison need the strong words of the Lord to break in the doors of their selfish exclusion and let them out into a share of the vision and the service of Jesus Christ.

Hear the word of the Lord for this year of grace, 1923, as it comes through the mouth of his prophet, Herman Hagedorn:

"Ah, what a web
Of gray inconsequential-seeming threads!
Of modish thoughts, the meat and money thoughts—
In webs, in webs, in iron curtains proof
Against whatever fires of poesy
Burn in white aspirations from our lives,
They hang between us and your inner eyes,
Those better eyes, the pure eyes of the soul.

"Lift up the curtain: For an hour lift up
The veil that holds you prisoners in this world
Of coins and wines and motor-horns, this world

Of figures and of men who trust in facts,
This pitiable, hypocritical world
Where men with blinded eyes and hobbled feet
Grope down a narrow gorge and call it life."[3]

This is particularly a gospel to women. We do not imply that women are more selfish than men. Indeed, we should be prepared to contend for the very opposite of that proposition to the end of time against all comers. The unselfish sacrifice of women has won for the world a large part of the blessings and the beauty which it enjoys. But women are peculiarly exposed to arrest by little concerns and selfish interests, so that without realizing what is happening to them they become the inmates of one little jail room. Family, clothes, the butcher, the baker, the candlestick-maker —these so easily became their whole world. And as necessary as those things are, they are not a big enough field for the energies of an immortal spirit. There is need for the art of efficient housekeeping not merely in the details of a six-room flat or a ten-room house, but in the details of a city, a state and government. Women must take the qualities of a home-

[3] From "The Heart of Youth." Reprinted by permission of Herman Hagedorn.

maker into the larger sphere of the common life and welfare. Margaret Widdemer, in lines of great beauty, has pictured that need and women's necessary response to it:

"I who labored beside my mate when the work of the world began,
The watch I kept while my children slept
I will keep to-day by man.
I have crouched too long at the little hearths at the bidding of man my mate;
I go to kindle the hearth of the world that man has left desolate."[4]

There are two secret passages out of the jail of selfishness. We call them secret, but they are the great open secrets of Jesus. They are a sense of the spiritual values of life and a sense of stewardship. The two are really one passage-way. They are open to all. We find the way of escape in the words of Jesus, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God." We find it in the prayer he taught us, "Our Father—thy kingdom come."

In the Epistle of Peter there is a statement of haunting suggestiveness that Jesus "preached to the spirits in prison." Just

[4] From "The Factories with Other Lyrics." Reprinted by permission of John C. Winston Co.

what that means we do not know. The words lend themselves to a multitude of fancies. But this we do know, that Jesus preaches to "the spirits in prison" to-day and brings this great word of hope from a heart full of love: "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."

"Self is the only prison that can ever bind the soul,
Love is the only angel who can bid the gates unroll;
And when he comes to call thee, arise and follow fast;
His way may lie through darkness, but it leads to light at last."[5]

III

Strong jails can be made out of very delicate and filmy things—thoughts.

"Stone walls do not a prison make,
Nor iron bars a cage,"

but thoughts frequently do. A closed mind may be as terrible solitary confinement as the county jail. Men make out of their cherished prejudices and cozy and finished dogmatisms a cell of extremely small size and dark, in which their minds are fed on the restricted fare of bread and water.

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[5] From *Poems of Henry Van Dyke*. Copyright, 1911-1920. Charles Scribner's Sons.

In Edgar Allan Poe's haunting story of horror, *The Cask of Amontillado,* he tells of the revenge taken by a man against an enemy. This enemy was invited down into the wine cellar and told to step into a narrow, circular-shaped closet and select a bottle of fine wine. When he stepped within, the opening was immediately sealed up and the man was left to perish there. Many a man unconsciously gives the same brutal treatment to his mind. We allow our minds to be hemmed in by prejudices which shut out the light and air, and the terrible revenge which nature always takes on the closed mind is that the mind dies. Race prejudices, national and class prejudices are prisons in which all sorts of deadly vermin breed. We so easily get shut up to our own particular view of things. Many churchmen are glad to hear the gospel as long as it does not touch them uncomfortably. They stand guard over their beliefs and over their habits, and their attitude shouts out in the face of the Almighty, "Thus far and no farther shalt thou come!" There is a present-day group of people who correspond to those who in the days before the Civil War would always rise in the church and stump loudly down the aisle to the door when-

ever the subject of slavery was introduced by the preacher. There was no opening into their minds for any definite light on the subject. To-day, of course, it is not slavery, but it may be any one of a dozen other things in regard to which we are unwilling to keep an open mind, and by so much we shut ourselves up in a little space, when God meant us to have freedom of large charity and understanding.

Jesus came to preach deliverance to the captives. Have you had life's great adventure—its romance of escape? Outside the barred gates—waiting—"the Master is come and calleth for thee."

V.

IN AN AGE OF SUBSTITUTES

And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment; that ye may approve things that are excellent.—Philippians 1. 9-10.

WHAT a rare gift Paul was praying that his friends in Philippi might have—the ability to distinguish the things that differ! It is a far better thing than common eyesight. They had that. Uncommon *insight* was the gift he craved for them.

The detection of differences is the beginning of all orderly mental power. It is the foundation of all science. It marks the contrast between the report of the natural world given by a man who can usually tell the wild flowers from birds, but cannot go much further, and that of the botanist or zoologist who knows intimately the hundreds of varieties of each. Only with the greatest slowness extending over the centuries in the upward progress of man

did the accurate observance of the different characteristics of natural events develop, which enabled men to discover their true cause and thus make possible science and philosophy. Medical and scientific research to-day is carefully and painfully threading its way along the same path, with minute care examining hundreds of closely related specimens and cases so that a true law or principle may be discovered.

The highest mental power everywhere has as an essential element this ability of testing the things that differ. In literature, whether on the creative or the critical side, it is the faculty of separating the essential from the accidental, the significant from the trivial, the timeless from the ephemeral, which marks the mind of the first quality. So progress in the ethical, moral, and spiritual world depends on the discernment of the moral quality of an action, the sure recognition of vital differences in motive and consequences between possible attitudes and deeds.

So much of our life is passed in mental confusion, steering through a mist or fog. Professor William James says that an infant's first mental operation is the feeling—"thin-

gumbob again." That is about as accurate a mental observation as we often make in the practical affairs of life. One thing seems to have some resemblance to another, so we check off the identification—"thingumbob again"—and act accordingly, when, as a matter of fact, it is probably not "thingumbob" at all!

This was a penetrating and timely prayer when Paul made it. Here was a little group of people moving out in the world of moral and spiritual endeavor infinitely different from the way of life of their neighbors. They had embraced a faith new in motive and conduct. This new faith was set against the background of their previous religious ideas and practices, and against the background of the hardness and immorality of contemporary social life. Love itself was not a sufficient guide through such a tangled moral wilderness. Unless love abounded in knowledge and discernment which could detect with the accuracy of a magnetic needle the difference between the carnal and the spiritual, the spurious and the genuine, the great and the small, they would soon lose themselves.

With great timeliness this noble prayer sounds in our ears as it reaches over the cen-

turies—to distinguish things that differ! There are so many things to distinguish between to-day! Never did the world spread out such a glittering array of things as before our generation. And life is just this "terrible choice." It is small wonder that with so much confusion and so little of any real standards of judgment present in their minds so many people make life choices which are at once tragic and ridiculous. Many careers are pathetically like a trip through a great department store made by a man who might take anything he wished, and who emerges clutching a paste diamond worth thirty cents!

In one aspect of present-day life, in particular, is the power of testing the things which differ desperately needed. Never was the art of imitation and substitution carried to such a high pitch. It is true in the material world and equally true in the moral and spiritual world. A large part of our industrial art today is *the art of substitution,* the manufacturing of imitations so clever as to defy detection by the untrained eye. The cheap is substituted for the expensive, the new for the old, the weak for the strong. A disillusioned man confessed recently that he would never again buy a

leather-bound book unless he could chew the cover first, and even then he could not be sure! We build homes of imitation stone made of plaster, and fill them up with furniture painted to look like mahogany; then we cover the furniture with a paper substitute for leather. Much of our clothing is of imitation material "just as good as wool." The imitation jewelry business has come to be a great industry of national proportions. We have synthetic diamonds, and a hundred varieties of "pearls," of which even the best imitations are themselves imitated. We have "white" gold and "green" gold and many other colors of "almost" gold. Fabric furs which grow on machines are passable substitutes for the old-fashioned variety which grew on animals. Glucose for sugar, oleomargarine for butter, cottonseed for olive oil are only a few ornaments of the dining table in an age of substitutes. In the feminine world of substitution substituted complexions and golden locks and similar mysteries are a Blue Beard's closet which we do not dare to explore.

But these substitutes are, after all, only on the surface of life. It is with the fraud in deeper realms—the ready substitution of cheap

imitations of genuine ethical and spiritual values—that the disastrous deterioration in the quality of life comes. Our social life is filled with deceptive imitations of genuine virtues and powers, so that our present civilization glitters like the window of a five-and-ten-cent store, full of cheap models of genuine treasures.

The familiar words, "accept no substitutes," might well serve as a guide by which to thread our way amid the bewildering moral confusion of our time. Let us set up a white guidepost with these large letters of warning—"Accept No Substitutes"—on three busy highways of life. Many of the most dangerous substitutions occur where the names of the two things confused sound very much alike. And there the resemblance ceases. They are fundamentally different, and to act as though one could replace the other is to plunge life into moral chaos.

I

A common blunder of our time is to substitute a sense of humor for a sense of honor. These two are so different that to join them in any way sounds fantastic and a far-fetched, ridiculous straining after alliteration. Do not

blame the preacher for it. That strange confusion is a commonplace of present-day life. When a person has lost a fine sense of honor, in the place of the high and sensitive idealism which ought to dominate all of one's action, there frequently sits a cynical spirit of amused indifference, with keen eye for the humorous aspects of life, eager for superficial entertainment, but blind to its great moral obligations. Such a substitution is like dismissing the pilot from the helm of a ship and putting a monkey in his place. Seamanship gives way to a carnival of monkey business. That is exactly what has happened in the navigation of a great many lives to-day.

A clear picture of this inglorious substitution is found in the cheap ridicule of the Puritan which prevails among large sections of our population. The well-known figure of the Puritan does not stir any feeling of reverence; it does not arouse any grateful recognition of his historical service. It arouses only a gesture of contempt. The sophisticated and emancipated intellectuals of our time do not recognize that the Puritan is one of the noble, even though at times tragic, figures in history. They regard him as a comic figure. The Puritan appeals

to the sense of humor. The cheap wit of to-day leveled at the Puritan expresses that distorted sense of humor which regards life as so much material for entertainment and jest. It is hardly a mental condition to be proud of when a high sense of honor and a feeling for the seriousness of life is something so quaint and so ridiculous to call forth no emotion but amusement.

We do not need to say, surely, that we hold no indictment against humor. It is one of the pillars of the Temple of God. It is a means of grace which might have prevented literally millions of tragedies, big and little, had it been allowed to get in its redemptive work. Humor keeps the mind sane and the spirit humble. It keeps faith balanced. It sets forth the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ in a manner impossible without it.

The sense of humor deserves a place on board the ship in the "passenger list," but it is no substitute for the pilot. To-day we see the wide prevalence of a spirit to which enthusiasm, true faith, and high hopes seem childish. Wit and mockery take the place of zeal, and this pitiful substitution strikes those who have made it as a great intellectual ad-

vance. Thomas Arnold of Rugby said, "I believe that *'nil admirari'* is the devil's favorite text." Certainly the cynical air of disillusioned amusement at the world is one of the most diseased mental states into which a person may fall, although it frequently appears to be shrewd and is felt to be stimulating to one's observation of human character.

Quite a section of current literature might be described under the title of one characteristic book, *Tales of the Jazz Age.* Moral principles among the heroines and heroes of such tales are an encumbrance. The correct thing is an air of sophisticated cleverness and sarcastic flippancy. In great fiction sex was always approached with a sense of honor. It is fashionable to-day to approach it with a sense of humor, as a plaything taken at its entertainment value. And what happens in fiction happens in life.

Multitudes are flatting the high notes in the song of life. The upper register of its high ideals of duty and obligation and honor is not sounded truly. The treble clef is astray. And without that treble clef life is a discordant blare.

The warden of Sing Sing penitentiary re-

cently entertained with moving pictures twenty-three condemned prisoners in the "death house." He told the producer from whom he got the film that "he needed something *awfully funny,* as the men were soon to die!" It must have been a ghastly entertainment—in the presence of the great question of eternity to be trying to divert the mind and heart with the unspeakably sad amusement of the average comic film! That desperate attempt to inject comedy into life is a fair picture of thousands to-day who shut out the noble and the serious from life and jam it so full of the amusing as to leave no room for anything else.

One of the keenest humorists in America, himself a rare artist in the cap and bells, Don Marquis, says with great penetration: "To traffic with nothing whatever but small quips and wheezes, scores of them, hundreds of them, tens of thousands of them as the years stretch on, with strained cleverness and nothing else whatever, would be a most intolerable and exquisite agony of hell!" What a suggestive phrase he has given us—"to traffic in quips and wheezes"! It is a description of many an insignificant life, giggling itself away to extinc-

tion. How pathetic such a picture is when set against such a life motto as that which is carved on the tomb of Mary Lyon!—"There is nothing in the universe that I fear but that I shall not know my duty or shall fail to do it." When that spirit of Mary Lyon drops out of life it is as though the sun dropped out of the sky. To exchange a sense of honor for a love of amusement is like exchanging *Macbeth* for Joe Miller's *Joke Book,* exchanging the "Messiah" for a ragtime phonograph record, exchanging the New Testament for the comic supplement of the Sunday newspaper.

II

Science is substituted for conscience. The words look almost alike. There is just the trifling difference that "conscience" has an additional little syllable. And it is, no doubt, a natural characteristic of a scientific age that it should regard science as a more than adequate substitute for conscience. With the advent of science the belief in witchcraft, astrology, and fairies has retired. Why not retire conscience as well, with its quaint suggestion of a supernatural voice? It was uncertain and sort of "creepy" at times. Science with its ex-

actness, its sureness, above all, with its common-sense reality, with no supernatural nonsense about it, looks like a modern substitute vastly better. So, conscience, as anything more than a formula for custom and tradition, has been bowed out of the world by large numbers of people. A perfect picture of this substitution, where interest in the questions of right and wrong with the emphasis of eternity on them has given way to a new scientific description of mental operation, is given by H. G. Wells in *Joan and Peter:*

> In the "eighties" and "nineties" every question had been positive and objective. "People," you said, "think so and so. Is it right?" That seemed to cover the grounds for discussion in those days. One believed in a superior universal reason to which all decisions must ultimately bow. The new generation was beginning where its predecessors left off, with what had been open questions decided and carried beyond discussion. It was at home now on what had once been battlefields of opinion. The new generation was reading William James and Bergson and Freud and becoming more and more psychological. "People," it said, "think so and so. Why do they do so?"[1]

In similar words Professor J. H. Robinson says in *Mind in the Making:*

[1] Reprinted by permission of The Macmillan Company.

To the modern student of biology and anthropology man is neither good nor bad. There is no longer any "mystery of evil." But the mediæval notion of sin—a term heavy with mysticism and deserving of careful scrutiny by every thoughtful person—still confuses us.[2]

The figure of "Duty, stern daughter of the voice of God," is taken down from its place in the mind and heart. The "voice of God" is regarded as merely an unscientific name for mental happenings which could not be understood in an earlier period of history. Now that we have the methods of the new psychology and psychoanalysis we can readily explain how the idea arose—just a suppressed desire of some sort! The mid-Victorianism of Lowell,

> "In vain we call old notions 'fudge'
> And bend our conscience to our dealing;
> The Ten Commandments will not budge,
> And stealing will continue stealing,"

is sadly out of tune with much modern literature. The old words which threw upon men's minds and lives a divine radiance—"obligation," "duty," "conscience"—have given way to an easier group of words such as "self-expression," "release," "complex," "independence."

[2] From the "Mind in the Making." Copyright, 1921, Harper and Bros.

The world can never be learned by learning its details. Science performs an immeasurable service in interpreting the material details of life and mastering them for use. But when men mistakenly look to science for an explanation of the meaning and significance of life there is a gaping void in the picture. Science can never be a substitute for conscience, for the response of the soul to God, for the recognition of the divine right of moral and spiritual realities to govern life. Science without conscience makes chaos. The years since 1914 have been crashing demonstrations of that proposition. A few years before the war Alfred Russell Wallace sang an optimistic hymn of praise to science in his book on *The Nineteenth Century.* He pointed out that civilized man had made a greater advance in the acquirement of power over nature during the years 1850-1900 than during all the two thousand years preceding.

But we may well ask to-day, To what has it all come? Has there been anything like a commensurate moral advance, or even an appreciable increase in the sum of human happiness? It may well be doubted. This faith in science as a source of moral achievement was

infinitely pathetic. Havelock Ellis tells how thirty years ago he and others stood around Maxim as that architect of death explained his new gun.

"But will this not make war very terrible?" Mr. Ellis asked.

"No," responded Maxim, confidently. "It will make war impossible."

Ellis wrote this reminiscence on the day when Maxim's death was announced, November 30, 1916, and added: "Even the brilliant inventor who in the dawn of the Metal Age first elongated the useful daggerlike knife into the dangerous sword was doubtless convinced that he had made war impossible."

Disraeli uttered a penetrating truth when he said: "Comfort is frequently mistaken for civilization." That is just what has happened in our time. Multitudes of people have confused the mechanical mastery of nature with a social millennium. Without conscience, without the understanding of spiritual ends and values in life, we have merely the comfort of the pigsty.

Sir Richard Gregory, the editor of Nature, the most important British scientific journal, concludes a summary of the gifts of science to the world with these pregnant words: "The future destiny of the human race depends on

whether men shall prove themselves worthy of the argosies of science which will enter their ports." In other words, it depends on the development of conscience.

This torn world of ours needs a more strenuous gospel than the complacent feeling that our sins are merely bad mistakes on the road up and that everything will come out all right in the end. Conscience is the nervous system of humanity and our hope is in keeping it sensitive to the valuations and judgments of Jesus.

III

A common mistake of a commercial age is to confuse what is called "punch" with power. Now, "punch" is an ugly word. It is slang, and particularly offensive slang. But it stands for an ugly thing. It is impossible to define actually what is called "punch" in the business and even the literary world. But, in general, it denotes the violent energy which "gets there." It is not the creative energy of the social or scientific or literary world. It is, rather, the force that makes a resounding noise, gives a sensation, brings immediate results. To use a pitifully threadbare and un-

lovely expression, "it puts things across." "Punch" is worshiped by great numbers of people as the most desirable of human qualities. The figure comes from the prize ring and brings with it the morals and aroma of its birthplace. Whole magazines and many correspondence courses are devoted to the cult of "punch." The great army of "Develop your Personality" correspondence courses which are offered as an incentive to an increase in salary, all promise the gift of "punch" as the golden key which unlocks the doors. It is a cult of selfish individualism, the achievement of personal, financial and social success. Big salaries, big business, selling methods with lots of "pep" in them—these are the evidences of power in the eyes of a great multitude which throngs Broadway and Main Street.

The same is true in the literary and dramatic world. The novel or play with the big scene with "punch" in it may safely dispense with all the unnecessary frills, such as the patient drawing of character, the creation of atmosphere and background, the expression of truth. It is sure of its popular success without them. But "punch" is not power any more than the blare of a bass drum is melody, or a

penny candle is a star. Our civilization is vibrant with "punch." The advertisement writer, the sales manager, the sign painter and the "movie" producer, all supply it in abundance. It is tragically deficient in power. Indeed, the outstanding characteristic of our civilization to-day is its weakness. Before the material, as well as the spiritual, tasks of a world that needs not merely to be reconstructed, but actually to be saved from ruin, it stands dazed in an uncomprehending languor.

The world is not to be saved by bustle, be it ever so noisy. It is not to be saved by dividends, let them swell as they may. It is only to be saved by spiritual forces. In other words—by real *power*. When men forget that and forsake the spiritual quality of life for the worship of its crude material prizes, its loud notoriety or its swift aimless motion, they lose the things which make true and lasting power.

"Power belongeth unto me," saith the Lord. It is moral and spiritual ideas which give power to a nation or to a person. It is hard to keep our vision of that truth clear in a day of clanging noises, just as it is hard to think

clearly while a brass band or a circus parade is passing by. There is a great deal of both the brass band and the circus parade in our present-day life. Consequently, we frequently confuse size and significance. Measured by horse power, the Majestic is a much greater ship than the Mayflower. Beside the Majestic on her last trip with a distinguished passenger list of a thousand including scores of millionaires, diplomats, world-famous actresses, novelists whose books sell into the hundreds of thousands of copies, the queer little Mayflower with its prosy company of middle-class tradesmen makes a ridiculous figure. When towed alongside the great modern liner the Mayflower would make but a sorry show. There was very little "pep" on the Mayflower. But there was power! In the spiritual ideals and the iron will of that little company there was power enough to create a Christian civilization—a new world.

Brethren, let us pray. Let us pray for eyesight. Let us join our petitions to that of an old man who is praying for us, as his voice echoes down the centuries: "And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and discernment, so that ye may

distinguish things that differ, that ye may be sincere and void of offense unto the day of Christ, being filled with the fruits of righteousness which are through Jesus Christ unto the glory and praise of God."

VI

EXCLAMATION POINTS

Hail!—Matthew 28. 9 (Moffatt's Translation).

OUR theme is a part of the most uninteresting subject in the world. What would you call the most uninteresting thing in the world? Many of you would doubtless say that it is your job. There are times when we all feel that way, and there are times when nearly every one has a right to feel that way. That is, everyone except the preacher. Whenever the preacher finds his job uninteresting it is high time for him to take out a superannuated relation, because he has already automatically retired from the effective ranks.

What was the most uninteresting subject that you ever studied? With some it was probably arithmetic, although it was not arithmetic with me. There has always been an impenetrable mystery and romance about figures before which I bow in reverence and awe. As it was in the beginning, it is now, and no doubt ever shall be. The most uninteresting

subject was not geography because there were always good pictures in the geography to which I could turn. The most uninteresting thing I ever studied was grammar. I believe many of you will agree with me. When to use "would" and when to use "should," when to use "will" and when to use "shall"—I am glad such questions are not asked in polite society. It would be too embarrassing an ordeal for all of us. Grammar appears to our imagination as a Sahara desert, without a single oasis and not even a mirage to cheer us on our way. I have been greatly interested to note that the experts of the General Education Board have made the discovery that it is a waste of time to study grammar. I always knew it even as a boy in the third grade, and it is a great joy to find the rest of the world catching up with me.

Such is our common view of grammar. Yet, like many common views, it is a slander. Grammar is a living thing. It is nothing but a method of marking ways of thinking, feeling, and willing. It deals with throbbing emotions. Moods and tenses and punctuation points are a chart of heart beats. Between the emotional climate represented by a question

mark and that indicated by an exclamation point there is a difference greater than the difference between the climate of Iceland and Egypt. It is the difference between midnight and dawn.

If I were to say that I wished to speak on some points of New-Testament grammar, the exits of this room would be crowded. It would sound like the prospectus of a journey across the desert. But turn that subject around and state it as it really is: "Some New-Testament ways of thinking and feeling," and we have a thread which leads up directly into the secret of a jubilant and conquering faith.

If we wander much through the New Testament with our eyes open, we soon discover that there is a "Good Grammar of the Kingdom," certain points on which, if we keep our grammar right, we move over into the apostolic succession and become heirs of that legacy of grace with all of its strange potencies and high joys.

I

The fundamental point of New Testament grammar is the use of *the exclamation point.* We find it after the word which is our text—

Hail!—the word that marks the supreme moment of human and divine history. What else could punctuate such a word but an exclamation point? That word "Hail," the first word of the risen Christ on the resurrection morning, expresses the new heart beat of humanity. It is the Magna Charta of the race. And yet it is a strange thing that in both the King James and Revised versions of the New Testament we find this word, this victorious, divine salute to the world punctuated with a period. It is grotesque. Try to read it that way, "Jesus met them saying, 'Hail'" (period). It can't be done! The truth of the matter is that the earliest manuscripts of the Gospels had no punctuation marks in them, and the imagination of the translators of the Scriptures was hardly adequate to the epic task of punctuating the story of Jesus.

Imagine translating any one of the Gospels or the book of Acts without having a whole barrel of exclamation points within reach! The sanctified imagination of Doctor Moffatt has recaptured the original inflection of Jesus and has preserved the divine exclamation points.

Christ put a stupendous exclamation point

into human life. It is a supreme tragedy when we lose it. The secret of the impotency of much of our contemporary religion is that it is wrongly punctuated. The exclamation point is missing. It ought never to drop out of our mind that the chief point in the New Testament is the exclamation point. The conquering, glowing, invigorated mood is the enacting clause of our faith. Without it that faith is a dead instrument.

It is a striking thought that so many people seem to be unaware that the Christian religion is, should be, might be, a power—a vibrant energy in daily life. So many Christians live in what might be called the pre-Franklin era of grace. Before Benjamin Franklin began to talk to the heavens over a silken cord attached to a kite electricity was only a vague presence in the air sharply felt at times of disturbance when out of dark clouds shot forked gleams of lightning. Yet that vague power was not harnessed to lifting life's loads or carrying its traffic up hill with an easy and ample power. Since Franklin's time electricity has been not an occasional bolt from the sky, but a motive power available for everyday tasks.

So much faith is vague and diluted. It cannot be measured in man-power or harnessed to men's tasks. Such powerless faith is full of question marks and full stops. It lacks the essential gift of God to man—a resolute attitude of emphatic joy. Christianity's exclamation point is found not only in the "Hail" of resurrection victory; it is found in that lifting word which Jesus spoke to the helpless cripple: "Courage, son! Thy sins are forgiven thee!" The weak limbs, the weak will, the quavering heart are empowered; the man walks erect. That is the charter, the divine will, by which we are heirs of Jesus Christ.

That this legacy is not merely a paper instrument let the glorious company of those who have stood up and walked in the power of Christ demonstrate. What a parade down the centuries! Or, rather, what a lyric dance, beginning with the very cripple who was let down through the roof to receive the empowering word of Christ! They are a great company of Overcomers, dotting the years with radiant exclamation points of leaping happiness and enduring power, men and women with an emphatic sense of the good of life,

its available power, its lasting joy. They have kept the world's calendar at springtime.

How does your religion punctuate your life? A little girl once told her pastor who had asked about the condition of her sick grandmother, that the lady "was in a very bad way; she had passed into a state of "comma." That is too often true and always tragic. We cannot say that a person's life has come to a full stop. It has merely gone into a state of "comma," where everything has been stricken with the paralysis of a pause. So many lives are what the economist would call "marginal." They barely pay. The question, "Is life worth living?" would be answered "Yes," by a hair's breadth. They are poised on a fine balance which goes up one day and down the next, just as a finely adjusted chemist's scale responds to every passing breath. So the answer to whether life is good or not is "Yes" to-day and "No" to-morrow. It is from that trembling balance that Christ came to redeem us. We need a wider conception of the redemptive work of Christ than the one usually given. He came not merely to redeem us from the destruction of sin but to redeem our marginal lives from their hesitations and

penury. It is a tragedy that to so many Christians the New Testament is written without an exclamation point. It has brought into their lives nothing which causes them to go down the years as the man healed at the beautiful gate of the temple went, "Walking and leaping and praising God." Their religion has no thundering affirmations, no enthusiastic ejaculations, no epic moods of grandeur.

Augustine Birrell comments on Ralph Waldo Emerson's leaving the ministry in 1832 by saying that "his attitude toward it was something like a yawn." That is exactly the attitude of many people to their religious faith. Their religion resembles the praise of a minister given by an eighteenth-century politician, who said that "he was a delightful fellow and wholly devoid of enthusiasm." That was the high-water mark of a compliment to a minister in political circles in the eighteenth century. But it actually describes many limping, halting, frustrated souls in the twentieth century.

Has your religion any power? Can it do anything for you and through you? Has it brought a partial, unsatisfied, futile life into a state of exclamation point? That is what it

ought to do and what it may do. Otherwise our whole life is a mistake in grammar. We are missing our destiny, just as birds which never fly miss their destiny. We do not resemble eagles, which we ought to resemble according to the authority of the Scriptures, but, rather, stupid penguins which never leave the ground except for a few awkward flaps.

Two aspects of life are dull, heavy prose without Christ's exclamation point.

1. Without an exclamation point the daily entanglements of minor circumstances will hold us prisoner. A life which should be an erect, forward stride becomes like Gulliver stretched out on the ground, tied securely by hundreds of puny, yet powerful threads. We lose the mood of happy valiancy through small irritations unless we are lifted above them by the surging of the great enthusiasms of Christ. The most complete denial of the faith of Christ which anyone can make is to go through life the victim of a gloomy and depressing despondency. That is the practical atheism which throws out its deadly influence twenty-four hours a day.

It is hard to understand how so many Christians can profess the tremendous faith of the

New Testament and yet have the course of their lives bound by the shallows and miseries of a gently complaining disposition. The large part of a great many lives is nothing but a steady drizzle of small inconveniences, discomforts, annoyances, depressions and despondencies. To escape from this drizzle many have sought out weird and weak substitutes for Christ, such as 'New Thought' dilutions in pale, pastel shades of the gospel of the energizing Christ. What a commentary on the loose hold that we have on our religion it is that the formula of Coué's "Day by day in every way I am getting better and better" should be taken up by such large companies of people! For it is only a weak and shadowy substitute for that practical power of Paul's, "Though our outward man is decaying, our inward man is being renewed day by day."

2. The enterprise of Christian conquest so often lacks the necessary exclamation point. To thousands of us Christ's great word "Go!" has no commanding thrill. When that word sounds in our hearts with God's great emphasis of exclamation and command, our lives are transformed from an aimless camping trip

into an eager crusade. Nothing can so lift life out of petty ruts as to hear with a thrill and answer with a glad affirmation the old slogan of Peter the Hermit, "God wills it!"

II

How may we recapture and retain the chief point in Christianity—its exclamation point?

One other point of New Testament grammar gives us the secret. *It is to have our religion in the possessive case.* The men and women in the church of the book of Acts had learned to speak of "my God" and "our God." Their Christianity was not objective; it was possessive. They possessed Christ. Christ possessed them. That was the secret of that marvelous power, the throbbing of which we can hear all through the New Testament just as one may feel all over a building the beating of a mighty engine in the depths below. Life took on a bound and a leap. That possessive case runs all through the New Testament. We hear it in the words of Thomas—"*My* Lord and *My* God!" How else could one punctuate that exclamation but with an exclamation point? They learned that possessive

case from Jesus in hearing him say "*My* Father"—"*Our* Father." Those possessive pronouns put an exaltation into the lowliest heart. Out of the poverty, out of the ghetto of Roman cities, listen to the words which issued from the lips of those whom Christ had possessed: "Beloved, now are we the sons of God." Is it any wonder that men waxed valiant on words like that and went into battle with them? What a prize that sense of a personal relation to God is! And how subtly it evaporates—disappearing like a great mountain peak suddenly enveloped by a cloud of mist. What a world-creating difference there is in that little word "my!" Men talk much about God. They do not talk nearly so much about "My God." Yet it is only when we can speak of "My God" that the word has any real power for us. Marcus Dods tells of teaching his little five-year-old girl the twenty-third psalm. He said to her:

"Daughter, I want you to learn the most beautiful words ever written so that you will know them all your life. Now, repeat after me, 'The Lord is my shepherd,' "—

His little girl looked up into his eyes and said—'The Lord is your shepherd,' "—

"No," he corrected her, "say just what I say—'The Lord is my shepherd,' "—

"Didn't I say that the Lord was your shepherd?" questioned the little girl with a troubled face.

It was a long time before he made it clear that she was to use that exact word "my." What a difference there is between saying, "The Lord is *your* shepherd" and "The Lord is *my* shepherd"! You may not feel that difference very much now. Some day you will. Some day when your path winds down through the valley of the shadow of death there will be nothing for you to hold on to if you have not mastered that little word "my" and can say "The Lord is *my* shepherd."

We spoke a moment ago about Thomas. That story of Thomas' journey from the bleak and cold uncertainty of doubt into the radiant warmth of faith in his living Lord is the most wonderful pilgrimage in human life. It is the journey from a question mark to an exclamation point. That pathway of Thomas is an open path and we may tread it if we will set our faces in the direction of our Father's face. If we open our hearts and minds to his entrance, bringing our lives into

real relationship of sonship to him, we too may reach that summit of life's achievement where we can say "My Lord and My God." Those words lead us out of baffled, frustrated, hesitant lives to a new power and lasting joy.

VII

THE SPRING SONG

"Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind."—Romans 12. 2.

THE world's great Spring Song is not Mendelssohn's but God's. We catch some of its strains in that melodious word in the Epistle to the Romans, "Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind." That great word of Paul's is the chord of a divine Spring Song which runs through the Bible and through life. Human lives are transformed, just as the earth is transformed during the progressive miracle of March, April, and May, by coming into a new relationship to heaven.

We do not think much of spring in raw March days. Indeed, the thought of a Spring Song the first week of March seems born out of due time. Yet those cold days, when the eye can discern nothing happening on the face of the earth are the days when God's great overture of spring begins.

"There is a day in spring,
When under all the earth the secret germs
Begin to stir and glow before they bud.
The wealth and festal pomps of midsummer
Lie in the heart of that inglorious hour
Which no man names with blessing, though its work
Is blessed by all the world."

For spring does not begin with violets but with astronomy. Before we have the song of the robins we must have the music of the spheres. Both the music and the violets are, in a very real sense, branches of astronomy.

In other words, the Spring Song of the earth begins right after the winter solstice in December. It begins when, to use our common, inaccurate manner of speaking of astronomical truth, the sun away down south of the equator begins to speak to our northern half of the earth and say, "Seek ye my face," and the earth answers the pull of the sun upon it and begins to turn on its axis, answering, "Thy face, Lord, will I seek." The earth brings itself into a new and closer adjustment to the sun, and the result is the fragrant mystery of spring and summer.

God's springtime in the heart begins when the soul hears his voice, through the magnet-

ism of Jesus and the still, small voice within, saying, "Seek ye my face." As the soul answers, "Thy face, Lord, will I seek," and brings the life into a new adjustment to God, then life begins to flower and bear fruit. We are transformed by the renewing of our mind.

All that a countryside locked in the sterility of winter needs is that the influences of the sun be given a chance at it. Every man's fundamental need is to clear away the accumulation of things that shut God out of his life. If you should ask the little wild flower just peeping up out of the earth along the roadside, "What do you need, little flower?" and that little flower could answer, it would say something like this: "Oh, I need the sky; I need the sea; I need the wind and rain." It is a large demand for a little flower to make, but it needs all the infinities of the sky and sea in order that it may fulfill the destiny that God has for that one little flower. So if we ask a man likewise, "What do you need, little man?" if he answers truly, it will be like the flower's answer: "Oh, I need the sky. I need God." He needs the infinity of God in his life to fulfill the destiny God has for him.

Men build roofs over their minds which

shut out God. Some do it with a low mud-thatch roof, shutting out God by things which are coarse and unclean. But other kinds of roofs we build will shut God out of our lives just as effectively. We can do it with a golden dome. We can pile one interest after another into our mind, until God has as much chance to get into our hearts and minds as his sunlight has to get into the cellar of a forty-story office building. Any roof that shuts out God is a tragedy, no matter how notable it may be in itself.

But a man may say: "I don't want to have anything to do with the sky. I don't want any relation to the sunshine at all." Very well. He need not have any. He can roof himself away from it. He can wall himself in so that it never reaches him. But everything about that man will show it. His skin will show it. His lungs will show it. His blood will show it. Everything about him will show that in shutting himself away from the sunlight he has denied a fundamental law of his being, which is the need for commerce with the sky in the form of light. On a larger scale, when a city forgets that fundamental need of sunlight for its people, when

it allows murderous tenement houses to be built, monstrous caves full of dark rooms, it soon pays the frightful penalty by those plagues known as "lung blocks," where four and five hundred cases of tuberculosis are to be found in the confines of a single block.

So a man may say, "I don't want to have anything to do with God." Very well. He does not have to, consciously. But everything in him will show that in shutting God out of his life he has denied the fundamental necessity of his nature. "We and God have business with each other," declares William James, "and in opening ourselves to his influence our deepest destiny is fulfilled." W. H. Lecky gives utterance to the same truth: "That religious instincts are as truly part of our nature as are our appetites and nerves is a fact which all history establishes, and which forms one of the strongest proofs of the reality of the unseen world to which soul of man continually tends."

We must turn our life on its axis toward God, as the earth turns to the sun in the spring. So many things conspire to make life predominantly material. There is always a battle royal to be fought between the soul

and things, but it seems to us to-day as though the struggle against materialism were a little harder fight than at other times. It demands a keener watchfulness and stouter struggle if life is to be spiritual in quality. The unresting pressure of the high cost of living is a spiritual as well as a financial problem. The price of things is a thought which never leaves the mind. It is omnipresent and almost omnipotent. It makes to-morrow a great uncertainty and tends to stifle the spiritual life like a building which has caved in. Weariness from the strain of a high-pitched idealism during the Great War leaves us prey to a materialistic reaction. The hurry to which our life is geared also gives the soul a small chance to live. We constantly use the expression, "Hurry up." It is almost a national motto, displacing *E Pluribus Unum.* But the inward truth of the matter is that we never "hurry *up.*" We always "hurry *down.*" Hurry always pulls one down from the highest levels of life. Haste demands a lightening of the cargo for the sake of speed and in the frantic race the things which make for the strengthening and enrichment of spiritual life are thrown overboard.

All of these conditions intensify the need of turning our life's attitude and outlook, of making a new adjustment to God, so that by a springtime renewal of the mind there may be a transformation of the life. Botanists tell us that a tree gets only one-twentieth of its nourishment from the ground. The rest it drinks in by its aerial roots from the air. The nourishment of the mind and soul depends just as much on aerial roots, on what is taken into life from the influences of God. A renewed mind is like a renewed earth. It is newly conscious of heaven—of God: newly filled with the influences of God playing upon it, newly active with God in working out his great purposes.

It is this prior necessity of spring blooming—the necessity for a new relationship to God—which the world is most liable to forget these days. Men are busy planning gardens; they are marking rows along which the fruits of cooperation, peace, and progress may grow. Congresses, parliaments, and associations are busy writing programs—arranging trellises along which the morning-glories of good will and justice are to climb. All very well. But trellises and garden beds do not make spring.

The adjustment of earth to the sun must come first. All the programs in the world do not bring forth the fruit of peace and good will. It is only the adjustment of the earth to God which will do that. We must renew the world's mind if the world is to be transformed—let it receive the great fructifying thought of God the Father, and the quickening conception of his kingdom.

It is that renewal which is for each one of us, as it is for all of us together as humanity, life's major issue. William Butler Yeats, the Irish poet, has defined genius as "the art of living with the major issues of life." Whatever the statement may lack as a definition of genius, it enshrines a noble ideal of life. The secret of both joy and power is locked up in the art of living with life's major issues, the things which feed its central springs.

It is an ever-present need of our lives that we may be able unerringly to recognize the things which are the main business of living. Many lives drift into a state much like a bad snarl in a parliamentary meeting; they get so entangled in substitutes, and amendments, and amendments to amendments, that they never vote on the main proposition at all.

They never arrive at the Order of the Day. The Previous Question of Existence—the purpose and goal of life—is lost sight of in a multitude of futile motions. So life adjourns in empty confusion without its fundamental concerns ever having been touched.

That is a great word of Phillips Brooks to young ministers: "Attach yourself to the center of your ministry and not to some point on its circumference." It is a word for every man, as well as for the minister: "Attach yourself to the center of your life and not to some point on its circumference." To keep the renewing and transforming springtime of God's presence in our lives—here is *the* major issue which outranks all others.

During the war the Navy Department made an appeal to the nation for old binocular glasses. There was something very arresting about the call for aids to vision of other days as a help in fighting the battles of the present. There is a deep spiritual suggestiveness in the appeal, for that is what we need—old binoculars for to-day's conflict. We need the lens of faith with which Abraham looked up into the sky as he went out from Chaldea; we need the clear vision of Moses as he endured as

seeing Him who is invisible; we need the sustaining vision of the psalmist, who records his pilgrimage through the day of despair, "I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living."

There is no patent process for keeping the soul's calendar at springtime. But there is a sure reward which comes from the practice of holding our mind and heart deliberately open to God, and creating a central place in our thought from which his truth may penetrate all our mental life.

Minds so renewed mean lives transformed. They mean earth transformed. That is the motif of God's Spring Song.

"For surely in the blind, deep buried roots,
Of all men's souls to-day
A secret quiver shoots.
The darkness in us is aware
Of something potent, burning through the earth."

The Spring Song is a great symphony from the theme, "If any man is in Christ Jesus, he is a new creature."

The world is locked in winter. All continents might unite in the line, "Now is the winter of our discontent." It is waiting for a

Spring Song. For long bleak years a *miserere* of desolation has pealed forth. The earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the revelation of a sweeter melody. The world's transformation can only come through renewed minds adjusted in harmony to the will and love of God.

VIII

THE DISCOVERY OF AMERICA

"Possess thou the west."—Deuteronomy 33. 23

A MINISTER with a fine gift for exaggeration, once said that the three greatest ships in history were Noah's Ark, the Mayflower and the Prairie Schooner. They were built on very different lines of construction, but they were all alike in this, that each one carried the best of an old world over into a new one. The remark gives us an imaginative grasp of an often forgotten truth, that the discovery of America was a long process extending over centuries. The Mayflower and the Prairie Schooner were as much a part of it as the Santa Maria. Even the elementary physical exploit of pushing back the veil from the continent was an adventure which occupied four hundred years. In John Fisk's great work on *The Discovery of America* the actual voyage of Columbus occupied only a proportionately small amount of space. To tell the

story of the discovery of the continent requires the historian to begin two hundred years before the discovery was made, in describing the intellectual and commercial development which made the discovery possible. He must also continue his story to cover three hundred years after the discovery until the whole continent was explored.

The discovery of America in its significance, as a political, intellectual, and moral force in the world, was an even longer, more complex process. The most important results that can come from our thinking of this great process is the realization that we are in the very midst of it. The best part of it is still ahead.

The discovery of America was not merely the business of Columbus. It is the business of all of us to discover for our own time the full meaning and significance of America for itself and for the world. That occupation is not only the chief responsibility of the citizens of America; it may be also their chief exhilaration.

This long process has many well marked stages.

I

1. *Columbus discovered America.* There is great zest in loosening the check-rein of our imagination a bit until we really feel afresh the thrill of the epic adventure of Columbus, pushing his way out into the great dark mystery of the westward trail across the sea.

It was one of the world's sublimest ventures in faith. Arthur Hugh Clough, in a fantastic and whimsical poem, has caught the pure, baffling wonder of it:

"How on the earth did Columbus get over
Is a pure wonder to me, I protest,
Cabot and Raleigh, too, that well-read rover,
Frobisher, Dampier, Drake and the rest.
Bad enough all the same,
For them that after came,
But, in great Heaven's name,
How *he* should ever think
That on the other brink
Of this wild waste terra firma should be,
Is a pure wonder, I must say, to me.

"How a man ever should hope to get thither,
E'en if he knew that there was another side;
But to suppose he should come any whither,
Sailing straight on into chaos untried,
In spite of the motion
Across the whole ocean,
To stick to the notion

That in some nook or bend
Of a sea without end
He should find North and South America,
Was a pure madness, indeed I must say, to me.

"What if wise men had, as far back as Ptolemy,
Judged that the earth like an orange was round,
None of them ever said, Come along, follow me,
Sail to the West, and the East will be found.
Many a day before
Ever they'd come ashore,
From the San Salvador,
Sadder and wiser men
They'd have turned back again;
And that *he* did not, but did cross the sea
Is a pure wonder, I must say, to me."[1]

Moving on a higher plane more in accord with the daring faith of a great soul, is Joaquin Miller's noble poem in which we can almost feel the spray of the sea pounding on the deck:

"They sailed. They sailed. Then spake the mate,
'This mad sea shows his teeth tonight.
He curls his lip, he lies in wait,
He lifts his teeth as if to bite.
Brave Admiral, say but one good word,
What shall we do when hope is gone?'
The words leaped like a leaping sword,
'Sail on! Sail on! Sail on! and on!'"[2]

[1] From "Poems of Arthur Hugh Hough." Reprinted by permission of The Macmillan Company.

[2] Permission of Harr Wagner Publishing Company, publishers of Joaquin Miller's complete poems.

But that was only Chapter One. Merely the book of Genesis. Exodus, which followed it, moved to heroic measures also. The work of discovering America was done by great venturers for three hundred years, and a noble company they were—Cabot, Hudson, Raleigh, La Salle, Joliet; some of them cruel and hard as DeSoto and Cortez; some gentle and noble as Pierre Marquette. Daniel Boone, and Lewis and Clark, pushed back the tangles of the wilderness trail and rolled up the curtain on a new empire. Not until the Civil War was the actual exploration of America complete.

What dimensions this task had is very pointedly indicated in the remark of an Englishman who was traveling across the United States, and looking at it from the platform of an observation car. After five days solid traveling, as he looked out over the expanse of California, he said to a companion: "They make a big fuss about Columbus discovering America. But really, you know, it is so big, I don't see how he could help it!"

The physical process, stupendous as it was, was only the beginning. The discovery of America was a great spiritual adventure as well as a physical one. The Mayflower also

was a ship of discovery. It bumped against more than a new continent. It struck a new idea, a new conception of political and moral life.

2. *George Washington discovered America.* In the affirmation of human rights which he made against the autocracy of the German king who happened to be sitting on the English throne he helped to bring into being a new political idea and a new force for freedom which had great effect in the Old World as well as in the New.

He discovered that America was more than a footnote to European history. It was more than an appendix to the old story of courts and kings. It was a brand-new volume in the collected works of God.

Washington was not the political thinker of American independence. But he was the personal force which made the new discovery a political fact. That fact was given new meaning by the genius of Alexander Hamilton, who from the bristling antagonisms of little States created a new federal power.

The discovery was completed by Daniel Webster. It is the fashion to discount the rhetoric of Webster. It is quite out of style

to-day, but it is a very great blunder to sneer at rhetoric. Webster's great phrases, "Liberty and union, now and forever," were more than words. They led out the American people to a new discovery of the Union, as something other and greater than the different States. His orations were a great welding force without which the nation could not have stood the shock of the Civil War.

3. *Abraham Lincoln discovered America.*— An America neither of East or West, North or South, nor border, nor breed nor birth, but a great people brought into a national unity. He was as real a discoverer as Columbus.

Now it is our turn to discover America, as a moral and spiritual force in the world. It is the task of the American citizen of our time to bring the great adventure up to date, to dig beneath the surface of life to reach the deepest meaning and purpose of America. That discovery must be made in two realms. We must get a new and larger grasp of what the moral and spiritual quality of American civilization ought to be and must be. We must discover and fulfill America's service to the world.

II

We must discover and make strong the spiritual forces in American life. The mere uncovering and utilization of natural resources, or the perfection of technique are not ends in themselves. America has accomplished a superb achievement in both of these realms, but that is merely the foundation of the house. Engineering is an instrument not of the flesh but of the spirit, and is ennobled only by noble purposes. What is the point to the saving of life by science and the invention of labor-saving devices, if health and leisure are only to be used in material convenience and gratification? What is the point to even the swiftest progress which has no purpose but speeding up? Walter Lippmann emphasizes the spiritual blankness of mere growth and "progress" when he says in Public Opinion:

> An American will endure almost any insult except the charge that he is not progressive. Be he of long native ancestry, or a recent immigrant, the aspect that has always struck his eye is the immense physical growth of American civilization. That constitutes a fundamental stereotype through which he views the world; the country village will become the great metropolis, the modest building a skyscraper; what is small shall be big; what is slow shall be fast; what is

poor shall be rich; what is few shall be many; whatever it is it shall be more so.[3]

Who's Who in America is a very useful book, but a far more useful one would be an authoritative handbook on "What's What in America!"

What does America mean to us? What have we discovered as its goal—the end which its life should express—the resulting quality of life which should make all its toil and material achievements worth while? It is both an inspiration and a rebuke to recall what America has meant to foreign eyes, as they have picked out what seems its essential meaning. Stephen Graham has listed a few of these impressions:

To Ibsen America was the button molder's pot, where the Scandinavian peasant was melted up with Tom, Dick and Harry into some one else, a second tryout for human material. To Zangwill, borrowing the idea from Ibsen, America was "The Melting Pot" where Jews were melted down. To Mary Antin America was the Promised Land of the Jews, though to do her justice her famous book was written before the Bolshevik revolution and the entry of America into a European war. To Maxim Gorky America was the country of gleaming teeth and mirthless smiles. To

[3] Reprinted by permission. Copyright, 1922, by Harcourt, Brace & Company, Inc.

the present writer America was the living West as compared with Russia, the living East—the country of humanitarianism and all that I have called the "Way of Martha." To H. G. Wells, America represents the future of civilization; to Arnold Bennett, the future of upholstery.

In that last contrast—of America as either the future of mankind or the future of upholstery—is the issue which is being steadily worked out day by day. To discover the soul of America and set it on top of the machinery with its hand on the lever, is the chapter in that long romance of discovery which must be written. What shall it profit a nation if it gain the whole world of technical power and lose it's own life? Carlyle has reminded us in his *French Revolution* that

Seldom do we find that a whole people can be said to have any faith at all except in things they can eat and handle. Whenever it gets any faith, its history becomes soul-stirring, noteworthy.

History cannot be made soul-stirring by real estate or bank deposits, by Bessemer converters or Hoe presses.

New York boasts that its "personalty" totals up to sixty billions. A large sum. But what is its *personality* worth? A man whose

personal property adds up to a million but whose personality totals only about thirty cents is a pauper. He will never become a public charge. But he is already something infinitely worse—a public menace.

Canon Barnett, while always keen in furthering social and other reforms, realized that the supreme problem in any nation is "how to spiritualize the forces that are shaping the future, how to open channels between eternal sources and every day's need."

In 1921 the United States government made large improvements along the water-front of Plymouth, Massachusetts, the central feature of which was the resetting of Plymouth Rock. That rock, which has been a shrine for centuries, was reset in a new place. What was done with that old bowlder is a striking picture of what should be done with the things for which Plymouth Rock stands. The ideals of the Puritan need to be reset in the center of our American life.

This is not to expect or to desire in any way that the laws and regulations and intolerances of the Puritan be called back to vex us. But it does mean that the great truths which shone out in his thinking be given a new place

in our thinking to-day. Among those truths which gleam like pilot stars are these: that life is a spiritual enterprise; that life is distinguished in proportion to its expression of high and noble purpose; that government is a moral enterprise which has direct responsibilities both to the people who live under it and to the God who reigns above it; that every human soul has an infinite value and an undeniable right to freedom.

It is only by the reassertion of these elementary truths of the spiritual world that we will ever dominate the marvelous machinery which our scientific and industrial age has created. Unless we can put the soul above the machine we will be the slaves of the machine. In the processes of industry "the American idea" in our time must mean that the man is of infinitely more value than the product, and that human rights must always precede property rights.

Our text, "Possess thou the West," was a direction given to one of the tribes of Israel in the portioning of the land of Canaan. It had no other significance. But it may well serve as a watchword for the Christian enterprise in America to-day—"Possess thou the

West." For just as truly as God first said to men "Have dominion," he is saying to-day to his children, "Possess thou the West." Take this marvelous wonderland which has been the last to be revealed in the uncovering of the Western world and possess it as the home of the kingdom of God—the organized expression of the ideals and purposes of Jesus Christ.

III

To-day's compelling adventure is the new discovery of America as a force for world service.

World *redemption* is not too strong a word for the need. Since the breaking up of the so-called Peace conference (what a bitter irony in the name!) the United States has disappeared from world cooperation like the sinking of the fabled continent of Atlantis. In these years of staggering need, when Europe has been sinking lower and lower in the quicksands of economic prostration, physical exhaustion, and spiritual despair, we have shied back in selfish fright from what we have complacently termed "foreign entanglements." We have forgotten that the worst entangle-

ment of all is that calamity of other nations which will inevitably draw us down into misfortune and suffering with them, no matter how unceasingly we babble our outworn political shibboleths. For the suffering of Europe we have generously tithed the mint, anise, and cummin of individual contributions of many millions. Let this touching expression of the sympathy of Americans ever receive all the praise which it justly calls forth. But we have omitted the weightier matters of the law—the cooperation which alone would make possible the recovery of Europe from post-war paralysis, and the end of the reign of terror in the Near East. A war-engendered weariness, coupled with ill-timed partisanship has lain like a palsy on generous and manly American achievements. The corner stone of American foreign policy has been the doctrine of the Great Refusal, immortalized by the rich young ruler. At all gatherings of the nations to struggle with the almost hopeless problems of international welfare, America has been represented by the Vacant Chair. That Vacant Chair, as an expression of the spiritual attitude of America, has been well described in the words of Rabbi Stephen S. Wise:

What Europe needs to get and America requires to grant is not a cancellation of unpayable debts, but a cancellation of the new un-American attitude on the part of America—that attitude which utters itself in the vulgarism and moral vulgarity of "we're through with Europe." The business of America in this hour is to cancel its attitude of austere and unbrotherly indifference to the fate of Europe.

One of the pathetic things at every meeting of the League of Nations is the fact that in sending for information from the different countries relating to such activities of the League, as the repression of the opium and white-slave traffic and the private traffic in arms and munitions, time after time the documents of the League bore the record, "No answer from the United States." They are words of shame that ought to sear the Christian conscience.

We smile at the quaint maps of the Middle Ages with their grotesque caricatures of the realities of world geography. But are they any more quaint and grotesque than the map of the world as it has existed in the minds of many Americans, including a number in the Senate, for the past four years—merely a *hemi-sphere!* There is no such thing as a hemisphere. God made a globe. He made it

of one piece. And what God hath joined together no man, nor any irreconcilable group of senatorical "die-hards," can put asunder. The very conditions of modern life, as well as the will of God, have joined the nations together, for richer, for poorer, for better, for worse, in sickness and in health, as long as they shall live. It is striking to-day that the farmers of our country are beginning to grow weary of the "splendid isolation" that was so alluring to many of them a short time ago. They are beginning to have a suspicion that the impoverishment of Europe has a rather direct relation to the price of wheat in the United States. The agricultural depression is a working out in the economic world of the truth of God, once put in a powerful agricultural figure of speech, "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap." God is not mocked. The nation that soweth to selfish isolation shall of that isolation reap poverty.

We must rediscover America among the nations of the world. We have sung quite long enough as our national anthem, the miserable ditty, "Let the Rest of the World Go By." God forbid that we should choose as our rôle in the world drama that of the modern Shylock who

whets the knife of his advantages and hoarsely demands his pound of debt.

In the councils of the world we have sought to be merely an "unofficial observer." Inglorious rule! We must not forget that the classic example of one who tried to be an "unofficial observer" is Pontius Pilate. "This is no business of mine," he whimpers, as he washes his hands the third time. And to that specious plea of innocence, the world has thundered back for nineteen centuries its answer, *"Crucified by Pontius Pilate."*

Thank God, there are many signs that we are coming out of unsplendid isolation into a shoulder-to-shoulder fellowship with Europe in the tasks of salvaging civilization. It is not the responsibility of the Church of Christ to present to the government the exact statement of dollars and cents it shall exact on the European debt or extend in credits. But it is emphatically the business of Christians to point out to their government the way of international cooperation, and say with the thunder of a quickened conscience: "This is the way. Walk ye in it."

For we bear, as Christians, the name of One who was not afraid of world entanglements.

IX

THE OLD TIME RELIGION

"By faith Abraham went forth, although he did not know where he was to go."—
Hebrews 11. 8

"Let my people go!"—Exodus 5. 1

THE principal trouble with "the old-time religion," as that phrase is frequently understood, is that it is not *old enough!* We are all familiar with the song, usually pealed out in lusty tones:

> "Give to me the old-time religion,
> It's good enough for me!
> It was good enough for Moses,
> It was good enough for father,
> It was good enough for mother,
> And it's good enough for me!"

What a man who sings that song is clamoring for, when it is anything more than an emotional outlet, is not nearly so old as he thinks it is. He is usually thinking of the exact form of religious expression and practice familiar

to him as a boy. And that is a very modern invention, comparatively speaking.

The particular combination of ideas and customs which is dignified by the title of "old-time religion" is frequently like one of the modern spurious paintings passed off on the uninitiated as an "old master." It is not a genuine "antique," which dates back to the creative days of the faith, but a local version which flourished about 1850, or at best in the middle of the seventeenth century. This whole sermon can be put into one sentence: If you want the "old-time religion"—and nothing is so desperately needed by the world to-day—be sure you get it *old enough.* Do not run back into the sixteenth century and stop there. Insist on the real thing. Go clear back to the beginning.

Notice swiftly three things about the frequent longing for "the old-time religion" with its inevitable implied disparagement of the Christian faith of the present day.

First, the sighing for the religion of yesterday is a *delusion.* Of course religion ought to be old. It can't be worth much if it is not. The sun which lights the earth was not made yesterday. The hills which give birth to the

streams which water the earth are not a twentieth-century product. When we wish to mark a thing as being really old we can say nothing so strong as that it is as "old as the hills." A religion to be worth anything must be so old as to be timeless. This truth is expressed in one of the most picturesque and suggestive titles of God in the Old Testament, "The Ancient of Days." It is only when we can say, "Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations," that we feel the lifting power of faith.

But while all that is eternally true usually the cry for the old-time religion is not a thirsting for the universal, timeless elements of religion—those large aspects of Christian truth which are the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. It is, rather, for those local and temporary forms which have become stereotypes of the mind. And the paradoxical thing about it is that those particular interpretations which are revered as being old are comparative novelties. The rampant fundamentalist, for instance, seeking whom he may devour, who regards any interpretation of Christ more liberal than his own as one of Satan's masterpieces, is not merely so much

concerned over the triumph of the Spirit of Christ, as over his success in ramming his own dogma down people's throats. He labels as "the old-time religion" a belief in the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures. That particular belief is really quite a new-fangled idea, as any student of the history of Scripture knows.

Many, if not most, of those who declare that the old-time religion, which was good enough for Moses, for father, for mother, and for Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, and is consequently good enough for them, identify it with the theological interpretations and even with the science (there lies the rub!) held in certain localities two generations ago. Their attitude of mind is exactly like that of the old lady who bitterly opposed the stained-glass windows in the new church, saying that she preferred the glass "just as God made it." Both glass and theology are made out of elements supplied by God. But neither comes directly from the hand of the Almighty.

This vociferous cry for the old-time religion is an *evasion*. The chorus, "Give me the old-time religion" is one in which many join. The big business man, in disgust and despair over an impertinent, unobsequious, social type of

religion which comes into his office and asks, "What per cent do you make on your investments?"—"How much of your stock is watered?"—"How much do you pay your employees?" cries passionately, "Give me the old-time religion!" It was much easier to get along with. As long as he subscribed to the fund for the relief of worn-out preachers, it did not interfere very much with his business. To-day many business men's associations are trying to say with a boycott on those organizations which dare to advocate putting Christianity into practice, "The old-time religion is good enough for me!"

To the man looking out on a perplexing world with its new scientific understanding and social emphasis, the simple, individualistic, emotional religion of two generations ago was ever so much easier to get adjusted to. Earth is so much more bothersome than heaven! So the man who does not like to mix thought with his religion looks back longingly to the days when it was considered sufficient merely to sing about it.

The unintelligent sigh for yesterday's religion is *a repression of to-day's new insight.* It says lazily, "The old is better." Back to

grandfather's world and to grandmother's Bible! Such a blind appeal to the near past and the local past strangles every new birth of conscience. Nothing could be more destructive of a genuine and creative faith than to model manners and morals and convictions by the standards of yesterday. Some one has said regarding Southern novels that too many Southern authors squatted about in military cemeteries to write their books. A good many religious books have been written in military cemeteries! Their chief themes are

> "Old, unhappy, far-off things
> And battles long ago."

When we stay in the cemetery too long we catch a cold and *rigor mortis* sets in. It has been well pointed out by George Adam Smith that the kingdom of God is not obstructed by being blown up, but by being sat upon. The most effective way of sitting upon the kingdom of God to-day is to begin to sing about the old-time religion.

The emphasis so far has been negative. But I would like to make one as emphatically positive as I may and plead for the old-time religion as earnestly as any camp meeting exhorter

might. My only concern is that it be the genuine article!

Leap the centuries and you will find two things.

I

The old-time religion is the religion of Abraham—a religion of intellectual and spiritual daring. The "old-time religion" of his day was not good enough for Abraham. Not by a thousand miles! He traveled that far to Canaan to find one good enough. The religion which really is old is not a mechanical perpetuation of the dead forms of other days. It is pioneering for God into new fields and new days. Abraham went forth although he did not know where he was to go. Had he followed the practice of many to-day, he would have answered God's call to venture forth by a timorous "No thank you. Ur suits me all right. The old-time religion is good enough for me!"

He walked west with God, even when that daring exploit took him directly in the face of every time-honored and revered orthodoxy of his neighbors.

What a venture it was! Professor F. H.

Giddings asks an unusual but fascinating question, "Why was there ever any history at all?" It is well worth thinking about. Why did anything ever happen that made events to be recorded? Why was not the record of the race simply one long afternoon of cattle grazing, in which all history could be summed up in one inglorious word—"ditto"? The answer is that history was made by the adventurers. The Order of the Sons of Abraham created history. They have made the history of religion, beginning with Abraham and going on up through the prophets, on and up until there comes that utterly reckless Innovator, Jesus of Nazareth, who announces in a perfectly scandalous way, "Ye have heard it said of old, . . . but I say unto you." Any future history of Christianity worth recording will come from the same source—from men daring enough to push out into the world of thought and life, to adapt Christianity to the needs and temper of their time, men who dare to strip the husk from the kernel of truth and separate the accidental from the essential.

General Smuts, in that noble figure of speech derived from Abraham himself, said, "Humanity has struck its tents and is on the march."

It is a tragedy if the church is left behind in a walled city. O for a baptism of that old-time religion of Abraham! Will Christianity go before this moving column of men as a pillar of fire, or will it be left behind like a collection of pyramids in ancient Egypt, dedicated to the past, peopled by mummies? Will the church have intellectual daring enough to make itself and its message at home in the new intellectual world we live in? Will it have the spiritual daring of Abraham to respond to the call of God which comes through the needs of the world to-day, "Get thee out?" Get thee out of the familiar and comfortable ruts of custom, out of the smug little dogmatisms which make void the Word of God through the accumulated tradition of unessential trifles! Get thee out of the world of petty ecclesiastical red tape and into the promised land of great fundamental human needs! Maude Royden has graphically pictured the failure of negative, conventional traditions to meet deep human needs when she tells of a friend of hers who was hungering for some explanation of the meaning of pain and sorrow, and who went to the church only to be told that one must not marry his deceased

wife's sister! Since the war in America there has been a widespread theological reaction depressing in the extreme. An ignorant obscurantism, the deadliest enemy which Christianity faces, is trying to identify Christianity in the minds of millions of people with adherence to wholly impossible and grotesque views of science and history. This, of course, is only a temporary backwash of the war. Already signs appear that it has reached the ebb tide, just as the other reactions due to the war in economics and politics are being exhausted. An overdose of "normalcy" is turning bitter in the mouth.

Let us bring that question back to the individual. Can we ourselves keep step with Abraham? Have we the "old-time religion" which can cling to the great realities of the spiritual life and leave unessential and irrelevant things behind, as Abraham left the traditions of Ur? It is only as we commend our faith to the mind of the time that we can ever hope to have it command the time.

Abraham Lincoln has left the church a noble watchword:

> The dogmas of the quiet past are inadequate to the stormy present. The occasion is piled high with diffi-

culty and we must rise to the occasion. As our case is new, so must we think anew and act anew. We must disenthrall ourselves and then we shall save our country.

Consider two concrete examples. There is no realm where this daring is so needed as in *the crusade against war.* One would think that the whole force of the church would be violently thrown against war. But actually nothing of the kind has taken place. There are a thousand resolutions passed, a million Christmas sermons on the Prince of Peace, but to take a positive stand against war—all war—still demands the spirit and daring of a martyr. It is easy to be against war until a tense situation arises. Then the spirit of nationalism throttles the spirit of Christ. There is no hope for the world unless the Church of Christ sets its face against war like a flint and is willing to sacrifice daringly for the goal of a warless world. It has been well suggested that we ought to add one more commandment to our Decalogue, "Thou shalt not make the next war holy."

In the realm of church unity the definite call comes to get out of the old habitations into the promised land. Can we move out of

our isolated and complacent sectarianism into genuine working federation? There is little hope of the church exerting any commanding influence in national life when it asks the world to listen to the clamorous disputes of a debating society, instead of to the voice of the Christian Church. "What army," asks Macaulay, "commanded by a debating society ever achieved anything but disgrace?" We have finally learned how unity of command on the Western Front during the war was brought about. It was not by any far-visioned strategy of the leaders, nor by any broad wisdom of the government. It was brought about by only one thing—the drive of Hindenburg's army in the spring of 1918, which threatened to end the war any day with a German victory. That gigantic and perilous onslaught did what nothing else could do—it swept away national jealousies and welded all the fighting forces into one single swinging sword. Perhaps that is just what is happening to the church before our eyes. Perhaps we ought to be down on our knees thanking God for the desperate situation of the world to-day if that situation actually brings the working unity of all the soldiers of Christ.

II

The old-time religion was the religion of Moses—a religion of social revolution. Perhaps "revolution" is a strong word. So be it. The religion of Moses was a strong thing. It was a blazing conviction which thundered at the established order in Egypt, in behalf of the depressed, defrauded, exploited people, the command, "Let my people go!" The familiar hymn of praise to the old-time religion has one line which declares, "It was good enough for Moses." That is an unmitigated slander. After his vision of God in the desert Moses was not content with any worn conventionalities. He had learned that the will of God meant the release of the toilers, the bondsmen. The social gospel is not any new thing. It is one of the oldest things in the Bible. It was one of the first results of the vision of God which came to Moses. And any religion which does not have that social vision and throbbing sympathy for men at its very center can have any claim to being an old-time religion. It is a pale, bloodless modern substitute.

"Give me the old-time religion!" Let the

world hear from millions of Christian voices the echoes of the command of God, "Let my people go." Let it reverberate through the United States, now left without adequate protection for its children against the exploitation of those who profit by child labor. Let it sound like the crack of doom thundering in the ears of Pharaoh in those States where children under fourteen years of age are forced to labor for ten to twelve hours a day under the shameful permission of the State. I believe that adequate protection requires a federal amendment prohibiting child labor. We are told by lawyers that we ought not to "clutter up the Constitution" with amendments. But let us repeat in high seriousness a remark first made in jest, "What's the Constitution between friends?" What is the Constitution between God and his friends, the children? I would much rather see the Constitution cluttered up with a dozen more amendments than to see the nation cluttered up with a million undersized, malformed childred deprived of their birthright!

In the whole world of industry we need the old-time religion which undertakes to transform an iniquitous economic order. One of

the largest textile mills of New England has been closed down for months by a strike which was brought about by its announced intention of reducing wages. The plea of the company was that it would not be possible to continue to pay the wages and stay in business. Yet all the time during the strike it has been paying on its stock thirty and forty per cent. How long will we continue to allow such industrial housekeeping to go on?

We must dare to attack the king of the industrial order. The king in his purple robes on the throne is the profit motive. Society is organized around the wrong center—on the motive of acquisition. The only remedy that will treat society's sickness is to organize it around the motive of service. And the first step though not by any means the only one, but one in which we can all do something immediate, is to show the world a group of men and women who are redeemed from the domination of the profit motive in their own lives.

So we have arrived at the end—where every sermon should find its journey's end—at the feet of Jesus. The old-time religion is the religion of Jesus—a religion of active, sacrificing love.

The Rev. G. A. Studdert Kennedy has well caught the spirit of that eternal appeal of Jesus:

"Passionately fierce the voice of God is pleading,
Pleading with men to arm them for the fight.
See how those hands, majestically bleeding,
Call us to rout the armies of the night.
Not to the work of sordid, selfish saving
Of our own souls to dwell with him on high;
But to the soldier's splendid selfless braving
Eager to fight for righteousness and die,
Bread of thy body give me for my fighting,
Give me to drink thy sacred blood for wine,
While there are wrongs that need me for the righting,
While there is warfare splendid and divine."[1]

[1] From *Poems*, by G. A. Studdert Kennedy. Reprinted by permission George H. Doran Company.

X

PARLOR OR LIVING ROOM?

"Remain within my love." — John 15. 10
(Moffatt's Translation)

IN other words—move in and live there!

A remark frequently made by visitors to New York, so frequently that it has become part of the great American ritual of trite remarks, and yet always spoken with an air of having made a fresh contribution to the world's wisdom is this: "New York is a fine place to visit, but I would hate to live there." It would be hard to imagine words which could more accurately describe the attitude of a great host of people to Christianity—"a fine place to visit, but I would hate to live there!" And they don't!

Yet Christianity is not a museum, an art gallery, a point of interest to be visited. It is a great "living room." The thing to do with it is to live in it. Yet that is often the last thing we ever think of doing with it. We

talk about it, we measure it, we visit it in a sight-seeing car, we photograph it and paint it, eulogize and disparage it—do everything with it, except the one thing it was designed for—*live* in it.

Jesus said, "Abide in me." He offered the spacious hospitality of his truth and himself to the whole race as a "living room." In the very suggestive translation of Doctor Moffatt, he said, "Remain within my love." Jesus says to us: "Live there. Let my love be the four walls of your life, close and dear and intimate enough for a sheltered hearthside; wide and far-ranging enough that the whole family of earth may find place within it."

I

A recent advertisement trumpeted forth this wise piece of advice: *"Make your parlor into your living room."* It is counsel which runs far beyond the realms of house furnishing. It enters the higher branches of architecture—the art of life building. Of course it is good advice in the realm of home arrangement and is being almost universally followed.

One reason why we do not have parlors any more is that no one can afford them.

Space is too costly to permit the extravagance of a glorified best room in the grand manner of a generation ago. But beyond the economic compulsion the passing of the parlor is due to a blessed baptism of common sense. We have come to see the ridiculous waste of setting aside the largest, sunniest, best-located room in the house as a sort of mausoleum.

Those of you who have never lived in New England do not know just what an imposing institution a parlor can be. But to those who grew up anywhere in New England fond memory brings the light of other days, and the vision of the uncompromising dignity of the "front room."

The windows, if not nailed, might as well have been. They had not been opened since the Revolution. The shades were usually drawn, and the horsehair furniture was covered with crocheted doilies. In one corner was a large rubber plant or a stuffed owl and in the other a "square" piano, "like the monstrous offspring of a pair of degenerate tables." The wall paper had a pattern of red roses and silver ribbon. The carpet repeated the red roses, adding dogs and birds. On the mantel-piece was a stuffed bird imprisoned

under a glass dome, and a gold clock that did not and would not go. The "whatnot" in the corner was covered with sea shells sighing melodiously.

The parlor was reserved for special occasions, for funerals, or when the minister came to call, or something equally painful. Occasionally some one entered to sweep and thus redistribute the dust around the room, but no one ever lived there. It was not much more intimately related to the life of the home than was the "Blue Room" of the White House. Meanwhile the family huddled together into cramped quarters at the rear of the house—frequently into a combination dining room and kitchen.

What a triumph of grace when the parlor becomes convicted of sin, and is converted and leads a new life as a living room—airy, sunny, inviting, cheerful and warm—a center of everyday life! Just that same transformation is what many need to make in their religion. So easily we get into the habit of treating our religion as a parlor, dedicated to occasional use, beautiful but remote from the day's toil and thought.

It was an artistic principle of that master

builder and artist, William Morris, that "every room should appear as if it were to be lived in." A dining room, he said, ought not to look as though anyone went into it as one went into a dentist's chair for an operation and came out of it when the operation was over. A drawing room ought to look as if some kind of work could be done in it less tiresome than being bored. Yet that is exactly how we often treat the truths of Christianity—as anything but a place to live in. Such an attitude is poor household art.

What a place to live in the gospel is! Where else can the soul find that mysterious but authentic feeling of *home?* God sent his Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to change creation from a house to a home.

There is a familiar line of Edgar Guest's, "It takes a heap o' living to make a house a home."

That line enshrines a deep truth. In that beautiful little story of the war, *The Worn Doorstep,* the author says, "There is a fine feeling about a house where many lives have been lived." In a high and reverent sense Jesus did the living which makes this house of earth a home for homeless men. His heart revealed

the undying love of the Father, that love which lights a cold world as a fireplace, glowing with life-giving warmth.

What chairs there are in the living room of Christian faith where weary feet find rest! Sit down in this—"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest;" or this—"He careth for you."

What windows open out from the living room of the gospel! They look out on all humanity, upon adventurous trails of service, windows

> "Opening on the foam of perilous seas
> And faery lands forlorn."

With this living room of your Father's house yours for the entering—why live anywhere else?

II

Look over the rooms a moment in that noble structure of faith, so familiar to us all, known as the Apostles' Creed. Look at the magnificent sweep of this room—"I believe in God the Father Almighty!" Here is a man who believes in God the Father Almighty at exactly eleven fifteen A. M. every Sunday morning.

For that is the hour at which he rises with the rest of the congregation to repeat the Creed. He believes it sincerely at that time. But he doesn't remain within it. On Monday there comes into his life some unexpected good fortune. Does his first thought rush out in thanksgiving to God the Father Almighty? Not at all. God was connected with something that happened on Sunday, not on Monday. On Tuesday some unforeseen sorrow sweeps over him. Does the remembrance of that Father who is touched with the feeling of our infirmities come swiftly to him as his support? Not at all. On Wednesday he meets coming suddenly around the corner one of those temptations that leap on a man before he knows what it is all about. Does there go out from the depths of his heart a swift S. O. S.—"O God, help me now!"? All these things would happen naturally if a man lived in that great room of faith. What has happened to this man who repeats the Apostles' Creed on Sunday is that he has made a quick inspection of the parlor, which was then closed up for the week.

Christopher Morley says keenly that "God ought to be more than a formula on Sundays

and an oath on week days." Move into that great room. Of course we cannot always be thinking of God any more than we can keep our eye on one dot. But the great reality of God may be the background of every thought we have, just as the Rocky Mountains with their white summits are the background of every landscape in the whole State of Colorado. So from hard and forbidding streets we can lift up our eyes up to the blue hills of God the Father, whence cometh our help.

Look into another room, or rather the same room with a fuller light—"I believe in Jesus Christ his only Son, our Lord." What a place to live! To live there means that his principles become our actual working rules. But we frequently make his principles only a show parlor. We spend our time somewhere else. Samuel McChord Crothers has compared our Christian professions to a polished brass poker which stands beside the fireplace. The poker shines beautifully in its stand, but it is not used actually to poke the fire with. When we actually want to do anything to the fire, we reach around the corner and take hold of a dirty, crooked iron poker and stir the fire into a blaze. So we keep our Christian prin-

ciples highly polished. But when we need to get anything actually done, we employ some more convenient tools covered with the soot of a dirty world.

Our public principle is "Love your enemy"; but the thing which we actually use is this: "Give it to him in the neck!" We put in our show window, "Love never faileth," but our working code is, "Better try force." We pray publicly for cooperation; our private view, however, is that the chief end of man is to get there first.

Our parlor is Jesus. Our living room, where we do our business, is the law of supply and demand, or the comfortable orthodoxy of twenty per cent profit; or the even more comfortable orthodoxy of forty per cent; or the smug exclusiveness of "one hundred per cent Americanism." We mix impossibles. This was beautifully illustrated in a recent letter to the New York Nation from a correspondent who described what a high-minded organization the Klu Klux Klan was. He writes, "It is an organization of Protestant Puritanism and cultured charity. To achieve these ideas, tar and feathers can be used." Tar and feathers and charity made a wonderful trio!

The great art of living is just that of bridging the chasm between theory and practice.

III

Robert Louis Stevenson once declared, "No man can truly say he has made a success of life until he has written at the top of his journal, "Enter God." That entry must be rewritten every day. To master the secret of the art of remaining within the love of God I can bring no patent process guaranteed not to fail. I can only bring one simple though ancient direction. When you make your parlor into your living room you simply *live* in it—that is the chief thing. And that means in our religious life such an old-fashioned thing as prayer. I would plead with all the earnestness I can summon for a moment of real prayer every day. I do not care when or how you do it. Dean Charles R. Brown well says that "God is no respecter of posture, nor does he have much use for the clock." The chances are that in our efforts to achieve a new reality in our religious life, the more unusual the time and place, the more real our communion with God will be. All over this broad land of ours there are thousands of

people who are strenuously going through the "Daily Dozen"—a set of exercises for the sake of a better national waist line and better health. Think of the possibilities locked up within a "daily dozen" moments given every day to real fellowship with God and adjustment of our wills to his purpose!

Recently I fell into a conversation on the train with a fellow-commuter as the train entered the four dark, smoky tunnels that must be passed through before Jersey City is reached.

I said to him, "These tunnels are an awful nuisance, aren't they?"

"Well," he answered, "I used to think so, but I believe I have learned how to use them."

I replied that I could believe that all things work together for good if he could find any blessings connected with the Erie tunnels!

"I have," he answered. "I have been commuting to New York city for fourteen years. I have come in from the north on the New York Central. I have come in from Long Island for several years. I have been coming in from New Jersey. No matter what way you come you always strike a tunnel just at the end of the trip. In two minutes you will be

dumped out into the crowded streets. The city and the day are in front of you. But for the moment you are alone in the dark. I found that the best time to pray I ever discovered. I think I can do real business with God in that two minutes."

Chester B. Firkins has caught in a beautiful poem the very spirit and feeling of that man's discovery of the tunnel as a dark lane that led to God:

"I who have lost the stars, the sod,
For chilling pave and cheerless light,
Have made my meeting place with God
A new and nether night.

"A figment in the crowded dark,
When men sit muted by the roar,
I ride upon the whirring spark
Beneath the city's floor.

"You that 'neath country skies can pray,
Scoff not at me, the city clod.
My only respite of the day
Is this wild ride with God."[1]

How would you like to read an exact stenographic report of your prayers for the last two weeks? Not what you meant to say, or

[1] "On a Subway Express." Used by permission of the Atlantic Monthly Company.

ought to have said, but what you actually did say. Would there not be a good many sentences which would end up in a row of stars, thus * * * * * * ? indicating where you went to sleep, or where you began to think of the high cost of butter and eggs! Thus what ought to be the most invigorating experience of life receives the attention of only the frayed ends of a fatigued mind.

Real prayer is like an hour of sunshine. The plant grows all through the night on the life and energy which have come to it in that one glorious hour. You probably do not pass through a tunnel every morning, but you pass some place from where you can send out your heart on an earnest quest that will not be denied.

A number of years ago Elizabeth Stuart Phelps wrote a widely read story entitled *The Gates Ajar.* She pictured what might go on within the pearly gates of heaven. Our generation is not so much interested in "the gates ajar" as men and women were in other days. But there is a door ajar which is a vital importance to every one. It is not the door into a far-away land of imagination. It is the open door into the living room of Christian faith.

It is opened for us. "Remain in me, as I remain in you. Just as a branch cannot bear fruit by itself without remaining on the vine, neither can you unless you remain in me. If you remain in me, and my words remain in you, then ask whatever you will and you shall have it."

Why not live there?

XI

CALVARY AND MAIN STREET

"The place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city."—John 19. 20

THIS is a simple statement of geographical fact in the account of the crucifixion of Jesus in the Gospel of John which has a wide spiritual suggestiveness. It is the incidental reference to the distance of Calvary from Jerusalem: "The place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city."

In the Gospel record, of course, there is no double meaning to this geographical information. It is just a plain statement of the physical fact that Calvary was near to Jerusalem. Yet it is a fact of spiritual geography as well as of physical. For it records the truth that the cross was near to the city. It is a luminous symbol of the truth that the cross of Christ is near to the city to-day.

Calvary was not far from the city on that day when Jesus traveled the short road be-

tween them bearing his cross. Calvary is not far from the city to-day. The sacrifice of Christ has a vital relationship to all of the eager life of every Main Street—its hopes, its love, its joy, its toil, its burdens, its tragedies.

There is one particular phase of this truth of limitless meaning which, if we take it into our heart and imagination, will bring us face to face with the realities of our inner life. That is the truth of intensely practical significance, that just as Calvary was not far from Jerusalem, so the forces and motives in the crowd which hurried Jesus on his crucifixion are just the same forces and motives which find play in our everyday life and which push through unguarded doors into our own hearts.

1. *"Let us alone."* With the hoarse cries which rang out in Pilate's judgment hall, "Crucify him!" was mingled the angry demand of the Gadarenes, "Let us alone!" The scribes and Pharisees recognized Jesus as a disturber. That charge they made against him was profoundly true. Their fixed and finished system had no place for a disturber. The "sacred traditions" of Judaism paid them good dividends. They wished no rude, inquiring mind to unsettle them. So the easiest,

most "practical" thing to do with this man with a new idea was to crucify him.

How far is this from the Main Street on which we live? It is the same protective instinct of intrenched custom and established wrong which makes a perpetual Calvary. Some one has said, "There is no pain on earth like the pain of a new idea." Against each new idea of Christ, as his spirit progressively seeks a new embodiment in human life and society, there is launched the old Gadarene resentment against any break in the old and easy ruts. For Jesus is a disturber. When he actually enters through the inner gates of our lives and of society, it means inevitably what it meant when he entered Jerusalem—a tumult. It means: "Here is a break in the old order. You will have to sit up and think. I am come to set a man at variance with his father. I am come that ye may have life and have it more abundantly—a richer feast of common blessing to which the lame, the halt, the blind are bidden."

When Christ enters life he calls for new adjustments. Many people have no objection to Christianity as a lullaby. As a soporific all the high priests of trade will approve of

it in solemn platitudes about the necessity of the church to the nation. But when it so far forgets its place as to become an alarm clock, sending its shrill, daybreak reveille of awakening against all sin and wrong and injustice through all the land—away with it!

2. *Indifference.* But comparatively few of the inhabitants of Jerusalem willed the crucifixion of Jesus. To that tragedy they contributed only their indifference. But that was sufficient. Their houses were not located directly along the Via Dolorosa and they did not stop to find out what the tumult was about. It did not touch them. Their indifference was twofold. It was an indifference to truth. Here was a man who was trying to say something. He had a message. But they did not bother to find out what it was. They showed also an indifference to a person. Here was a man in trouble, being done to death. It was not worth asking, "What is his defense?"

Both of these deadly indifferences move in our daily life. Indifference to truth is at home in Main Street. Here is a man who is trying to say something. Faint echoes of it come to our ears. But we detect a slight foreign accent or at least he does not speak the stereotypes

which are sacred in our ears. We do not try to understand. We do not even let him speak. We send in a call for the police reserves. We believe in free speech as long as we are doing the speaking, or as long as one of our clique, our party, our crowd is speaking—no longer. We get national hysterics which result in such abominations as the Lusk laws in New York State. What we do not understand or do not like we ticket with the meaningless epithets of damnation, "Bolshevist," "Socialist," "agitator," "undesirable alien," "heretic," and pass on without disturbing a single wrinkle of our gray matter.

There is a tumult going on at the corner, in the industrial world. Angry cries are flying through the air. The crowd is noisy and blocks traffic. But it does not come into our dining room and we are too busy to find out what the matter really is. A great strike such as the Steel Strike of 1919 can go on with the vast majority of the population in its immediate vicinity not having the least idea in the world what it is all about. Reading the daily papers they only see through a glass darkly, and any other source of information is taboo as "red" propaganda.

Or it is a tumult in the political world—in the town or State. Something is being "railroaded through." Suspicions are current. The best things of the common welfare are at stake. But it is a complex matter. It is a nuisance to bother with. "We have our living to make." So we never find the truth at issue. It is a slight thing, apparently—yet it is not far from that indifference which allowed the tragic procession to go on to Calvary. Gerald Stanley Lee says very truly,

> If the men who were crucifying Jesus could have been suddenly stopped at the last moment, and could have been kept perfectly still for ten minutes and could have thought about it, some of them would have refused to go on with the crucifixion. If they could have been stopped for twenty minutes, still more of them would have refused to go on with it. They would have stolen away and wondered about The Man in their hearts. People crucified Christ because they were in a hurry.

And how easily the sin of indifference to a person doth beset us! Richard Whiteing says that the average Londoner in the congested slums of the city could hear a cry of "murder" at midnight and his only comment would be, "What a raucous voice!" To pause before a human being with a real effort to understand

him, to appreciate his situation and real needs—surely nothing is more definitely Christlike. But what a force impels us to go along on our elbowing way without stopping to discover what is happening in another person's life! The person may be in the very intimacy of our own family and yet we see him very inaccurately and never bend down in intelligent sympathy to find out what it is that he really wants, strives for, or needs. It may be the man on our block or on the other side of town. We speculate somewhat at times on the fascinating theme of the recognition of friends in heaven. But there is a matter vastly more important—the recognition of friends *on earth.* It is vastly more important to recognize in the people who cross our path, not as part of a crowd or labeled and pigeonholed "types," but friends to whom we reach out understanding sympathy instead of a stereotyped indifference.

It will help us to preserve this grace in our lives to remember the day when men's indifference to a person allowed Jesus to go on to the cross.

3. *Class feeling.* Jesus did not "belong." He was an outsider to select circles in Jerusa-

lem. Queer Galilæans were always getting into trouble in the city, so what was there new in this particular squabble involving "just another of the same class"? And so because he belonged so manifestly to another crowd, was so different in connections and thought, he aroused little interest and no sympathy in official minds.

Watch the same blind force in action before our front doors. It may be the immigrant, strange in garb, mentally and physically, whom we unconsciously ticket as belonging to another class, and by so much, not a great concern of ours. It is so easy to join in an unintelligent hue and cry. That word, which is being bandied about so endlessly—Americanism—may easily be made to cover a multitude of sins; sins against the American tradition of liberty and toleration; sins against the Christian tradition of sympathetic helpfulness.

Whenever we allow the feeling, "He doesn't belong to us, he's another kind," to take the helm that steers our actions, we give place to one of the forces that hurried Jesus along to the cross.

The cross is not far from the city. Those

forces which were set against Christ and his kingdom in A. D. 32 still run at large wherever men live and work together, though frequently in new disguises. As we lay those scenes of Jesus' days in Jerusalem alongside of our life to-day, the humble heart-searching question of the disciples is born again within us, "Lord, is it I?"

XII

A SLICE OF THE MILLENNIUM

"Then . . . the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped."—Isaiah 35. 5

THE Messianic picture in the thirty-fifth chapter of Isaiah is one of the most lofty and beautiful passages of poetry in human speech. Its magnificent faith, its melody and beauty have all through the centuries made the heart of man rejoice and break out into singing. Its divine vision of the Messianic kingdom has made the desert of weariness and discouragement blossom into faith.

But its details, as well as the grandeur and beauty of the whole, are very arresting. These details are in the picture, of course, as typical handicaps that shackle and cripple life, which shall be removed in the Messianic kingdom. But as such they also indicate pathways by which the Kingdom shall be reached. For we do not look for this kingdom to drop suddenly out of the sky as a ready-made social order, in regard to which man's only duty is to

receive and enjoy. We look to it, rather, as the goal toward which the Spirit of Christ is leading humanity. It is just as true of the spiritual achievement of the race as it is in the Pilgrim's Progress of an individual that

> "Heaven is not reached by a single bound,
> But we climb the ladder round by round."

So these details of that Day of the Lord—the strengthened hands, the confirmed knees, the encouraged heart, the opened eyes, the unstopped ears, the loosened tongue, are marks of a Christian order of life for which we look and pray and work. What we do to bring about any one of them, to any degree, is by so much, a bringing in of the Kingdom.

No characteristic of the millennium as pictured by Isaiah is more striking and suggestive for practical action than the fact that when it comes "the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped." The inference is clear that whenever any ears are so unstopped that through them the mind and heart can hear and interpret the voices of the world, there we have a slice of the millennium. Lend me your ears, then, friends and countrymen, for I wish not merely to talk into them but about them.

To a generation which lives amid the most clamorous orchestra of noises which ever bombarded an eardrum it is natural rather to take its idea of the millennium from the book of Revelation, especially from that blessed verse, "There was silence in heaven for the space of half an hour." Our eyes yearn for the golden streets, no doubt. But even more longingly our ears yearn for the silent half hour when all noises cease together. Professor E. J. Goodspeed in a recent issue of the Atlantic Monthly has made out a strong case for the claim that civilized man has far outdone the primeval savage in his achievements in the art of producing barbaric noise. He claims that the ancient tom-tom, the war cry, and the clanging gong are a soothing lullaby compared to the variegated din of a city's streets, with the roar of the elevated, the thunderous crash of the ten-ton truck, the shriek of the auto horn, and the cry of the newsboy punctuating it all with a shrill treble. "I wish," said a weary man the other day, as his office resounded with the din of putting up a skyscraper next door, "I wish the Noiseless Typewriter Company would put out a riveting machine!" Visitors to Chicago remember the

piercing note of the traffic policeman's whistle with the painful clearness with which a person remembers the puncturing of an ear drum. It sounds like the cry of a lost soul. Perhaps it is. At any rate, it is one of the things about which Chicago can proudly boast, "Nothing like it anywhere else!" We may be pardoned for thinking of the millennium as a sound-proof cell. There is still a large field of service ahead of the Society for the Suppression of the Unnecessary Noise for the employment of all the energies and ingenuities it can muster.

Nevertheless, one of the most pernicious diseases of our noisy civilization is that of stopped-up ears. It is hardness of hearing in the social and industrial, the international and spiritual world which holds back that reign of understanding and sympathy, that good will and brotherhood which are essential attributes of the kingdom of God. The inner ear of the mind and heart which should catch the spiritual voices of the world becomes clogged. The messages from the neighbors, whether from the other part of town across the railroad tracks, or across the seas, messages which would make for sympathetic un-

derstanding, fall on deaf ears. We live in an industrial and commercial boiler factory and it is hard to catch any less clamorous or more distant noises than that of the clanging trip hammers immediately in front of us.

"New ears for old" is the wonderful gift which the radio has brought us in the physical world. The imagination has barely taken hold of the possibilities there are in this discovery of new ears for humanity. London whispers, and New York, San Francisco, and Honolulu listen gravely. A ship in distress in the mid-Pacific ticks out its cry to the air and immediately the rudders on every vessel within five hundred miles turn toward it and the dials of the engines are set at "Full Speed Ahead" in a race for redemption. A great crowd in the plaza at Havana listened during the first moments of 1923 to the chimes of Trinity Church in New York pealing out a welcome to the New Year.

What if we might have a similar miracle in the spiritual and social world, whereby humanity might have new ears for old; ears from which the plugs of selfish absorption, class and race prejudices, and national isolations have been removed! Unstopping the ears of

the spiritually deaf is an indispensable prelude to the millennium. To bring in the golden age of brotherhood we need, first, sympathies so alive and broad of range and keen of hearing that they can catch both the whisper of the still sad music of humanity and the still, small voice of God.

We close our inner ear so readily! Harriet Martineau had to supplement her impaired powers of hearing by the use of a large ear trumpet. She had a very disconcerting but convenient way of misplacing it or taking it down from her ear whenever she did not wish to listen to anything. Such a privilege discloses many advantages attached to an ear trumpet. With perfectly good hearing an inflexible standard of courtesy compels us to stand at attention while Mr. Brown repeats for the tenth time in our hearing his veteran anecdote, or Mrs. Brown tells with gusto what little Herbert said the first time he went to Sunday school. But if we had just very unfortunately misplaced our ear trumpet when these *bon mots* appeared imminent, how delightful it would be! Or what a privilege to let the trumpet slip into our pocket when the Hon. Daniel Webster Jones, M. C., sets forth

his views, *seriatim* and *in extenso* on the tariff as a bulwark of national prosperity!

But we need not long inordinately for an ear trumpet. We do the trick of shutting off our hearing very expertly as it is—too expertly! When voices reach us which do not harmonize with our preconceived ideas or settled ignorances and prejudices—snap goes the switch which shuts off our hearing and the mind and sympathies are just as immune from disturbances as though we were stone deaf. Herbert Spencer invented a sort of stopping with which he filled his ears when he used to shut himself away from a company and be protected from any danger of hearing their conversation. Read his biography and you will see the terrible price he paid for his selfish isolation in the shrinking of his sympathies and the pathetic frigidity of his human contacts. The unwelcome truth which disturbs our neatly arranged world, the point of view which differs from our own, the cry for help which comes in the accents of a strange foreign tongue, and which would put us to the inconvenience of actually doing something about it—all these do not get past the outer barrier of our intentional deafness. No

wonder the millennium halts with so many stopped up ears!

"Then . . . the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped." What immediate steps can we take to bring about that much of the millennium, here and now?

I

Hearing, like charity, begins *at home.* The frictions, the hardness, the coldness that shades over into cruelty, all come from mental and spiritual deafness to other personalities about us. The tragedy of many a home is due to the fact that either one or more members of it do not take the trouble to listen patiently enough and understandingly enough to discover what it is that the others really want, what the unexpressed and repressed desires of their hearts are.

Many a man will listen for hours to the noises of his auto engine, trying with infinite patience to learn just what it is which hinders it from running smoothly, who will never think hard for ten minutes over the problem of what may be his wife's secret trouble. The reason frequently is that we are talking so

much ourselves that we do not hear what the other person has to say. Edward Simmons, the painter, in his autobiography, tells of a ready talker to whom a lady once said, timidly, "Pardon me for interrupting you but"—

"Madam," he replied, "no one could ever speak without interrupting me."

The frank confession is too often true. The racing motor of our own egoism drowns all other noises. Our ears hear nothing but the din of our own discordant solo, when they ought to be attuned to a chorus of blended voices.

To put the soft pedal on the internal clamor of selfishness and listen to the people at home, and in the daily encounters of the market place is a first step toward the millennium. We may reverently paraphrase that great exhortation of Paul's, "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus" and say, "Let those ears be in us which were also in Christ Jesus." What sensitive hearing he had! The call of the blind beggar by the roadside, the whispered conversations of his disciples, the quiet movement of a woman in need—none of these sounds escaped him. Whenever he confronted a human personality he stood at attention. All

of his marvelous sympathy was instantly on the alert. With ears ever open to every voice of human need and aspiration, he created a new world of good will wherever he went. That creative power of understanding and sympathy is just what the world about us needs.

III

Are your ears open to the still, sad music of humanity? They must be if the kingdom of God is ever to come. Can you hear the voices from other groups and classes, and other lands? Is the receiving apparatus in your mind and heart able to catch the voice of Asia and Europe and make anything out of it with a vital meaning to yourself? Or is its range limited, like a cheap crystal radio set, to the distance between your house and your office? There is a marvelous parade passing daily up and down your very streets. Does it mean anything to you?

"There's Asia on the Avenue
And Europe on the street
And Africa goes plodding by
Beneath my window seat."

Does your heart hear anything but irritating

noises which you cannot translate? Can you hear a heart beat in a great crowd, the voice of baffled aspiration, the sigh of weariness and despair? Or are you like the New Yorker who mingled with a crowd of Jewish garment workers blocking the sidewalk of Fifth Avenue, Manhattan, at noon and who cynically said, "I can see why they have pogroms in Russia"?

In the *Sutta Nipata,* one of the sacred books of the Buddhists, this advice is given: "Make yourself an island." But in the New Testament, the sacred book of the Christians, the very opposite advice is given: "Join yourself to the mainland of humanity." In these after-the-war days in the United States there have been a good many "Buddhists" who endeavored to make of themselves and their country an island separated from the great continents of human need.

Sometimes even in the church we are hard of hearing. Frequently "where sound the cries of race and clan" the pipe organ is pealing out so loudly the strains of "Peace, Perfect Peace," that we do not hear the strife outside of the building. Our stopped-up ears make us poor servants of the great Master of the art of listening.

Christ seeks to lead us into a sympathetic fellowship with all mankind, so close that we hear and understand the voice of need in all dialects.

> Come—let us get our gospel now by heart—
> *"One man in grief sets a whole world in tears;*
> *No man is free while one for freedom fears."*

The fundamental defect is that we do not hear *the still, small voice of God.* The clamors of the earth assault the ear and confuse the mind; the voice from the sky is drowned out in the din. A resident of New York recently said that he had heard in the city every kind of noise except one—thunder. Artificial thunder is common enough in the city. Blasting in excavating, automobiles, the unceasing traffic over cobblestones, all supply it in excess. But real thunder, sky thunder, rarely makes itself heard. "Which things are a parable." Our ears are stopped to the voices of the sky, the great words of eternal life. And because those great words of God do not enter our ears and fill our minds with awe, so much of our chatter is futile, as superficial and mechanical as the jingle of a cash register. The arresting cry of the old prophet should echo

throughout the streets, "O Earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the Lord."

Without that penetration of the divine will and purpose of life into our inmost mind, we have very little to say. The Gospels record a very suggestive miracle performed by Jesus where a dumb man was cured by having his hearing restored. Hearing and speech are very intimately related. The great reason that our civilization has so little to say of profound significance is that it hears so little of the voice of God. The invention of the radio has shown the tragic disproportion between the wonder of the means of communication and the pitiable mediocrity of the message being communicated. Inventions that approach the sublime are used to project the ridiculous. With keen, satiric touch a writer, Charles Merz, has imagined the future of the radio in China. He says: "Whoever has spent a radio evening in America—ear-phones clamped upon his head, can conceive its counterpart in China . . . Station WLB, at Tientsin, broadcasting . . . Miss Mon Ling Wang will now sing 'Silver Threads Among the Gold' . . . Stand by for two minutes, please. . . . Our next number, ladies and gentlemen, will

be a monologue by Mr. Harry Wu Soo Koo: 'How I Killed My Mother-in-Law.'"

If our age is to have any great expressions of life, it must hear the great words of life. If our personal lives are to have significance, our ears must be open to the voice of God. The great words of Jesus—the Father God, the primacy of the inner spiritual quality of life, the family relationship of all men, must be the core of all our thinking.

IV

Can you hear the voice of the future? To many people the very question is ridiculous. What do they care for the future? They are living now. Their attitude to posterity is exactly that of Sir Boyle Roche, who asked in the House of Commons the classic question: "Why should we care for posterity? What has posterity done for us?"

Yet what hope is there for the world unless we can actually hear the need of to-morrow's children? Henry Clay once, in a grandiloquent gesture, when crossing the Appalachian Mountains, put his ear down to the ground and said: "I can hear the tramp of the com-

ing millions." It is too bad that the spirit of Henry Clay did not possess the destroyers who have wasted the heritage of those coming millions in carelessly slaughtered forests, squandered water power and mineral resources, all for the sake of immediate loot. The ears of the whole inglorious gang of bandits who have robbed the future generations of the natural resources of the country, and the somnolent public which has allowed it to be done, are completely deaf to the needs and rights of the future.

Yet there are those who can hear the voice of the future. Scientists hear it keenly. At the meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science in Boston in December, 1922, there was told a perfectly amazing story of the unceasing effort made by a group of scientists to discover an adequate fuel for the future when the world's limited supply of coal and oil and wood gives out, as it will some day give out. Twelve years of continuous study have been made in one laboratory, observing the chemical changes in the growing leaf, in the hope of surprising nature in her secret of making carbon directly from the air. The only way that can be seen for

keeping civilization alive after the coal and oil are gone is through some mastery of the source of energy in the carbon of the air. Scientists in many fields are cooperating in an intense and unremitting study of the problem of getting fuel from sunlight.

Think of it—men so deeply concerned over what will happen five hundred or a thousand years from now that they give the energies of their lives to the problem! What an ideal they hold up! What a rebuke to selfish lives entangled entirely in the moment.

A sense of the future, just as keen and even deeper in its devotion, marks the lives of those who have gone into the great adventure of giving the future the ideas and ideals of Jesus Christ as its guiding force.

The foreign missionaries have heard the call of the future as ambassadors of the Master Builder. They have gone down where the deep foundations for the civilization of to-morrow are being laid, content that their lives shall be buried in obscurity if they can help to raise the structure of a noble home for the children of to-morrow. These builders are just like the workmen who risk their lives and health in going down into the caissons to pre-

pare the foundations for the skyscrapers of the future.

Can we hear the voice of to-morrow? We can if we have the ears of Christ. To prepare the next generation, to equip it with the ideals which will achieve peace and brotherhood is a major task which can be shunned by Christian men or women only at the cost of denying their Lord.

As we thread our lives with the great purpose of building for a better future, they are lifted out of the pettiness of selfish absorption into dignity and responsibility.

Jesus restored hearing to the deaf. "Lend him your ears."

XIII

TRANSLATING THE CROSS

"And it was written in Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin."—John 19. 20

OVER the cross of Jesus on Calvary there was written an inscription in three languages, Hebrew, Latin, and Greek. For multitudes of people that inscription has never been translated into English. It is still Greek to them. The real meaning of the cross is still locked up in a dead language.

There is a real shock when we discover how acceptably we may go through the motions of an upright, honorable, and even a religious life, and yet never bear any real part in the sufferings of Christ. When we speak of the cross of Christ and its meaning in his life and in ours, we need to get a very clear focus on the meaning of the word. It is common to refer to almost any sorrow or burden of trouble as a "cross." Such usage raises a fog which obscures the real meaning of the word.

Jesus knew sorrow from the beginning of his life to the end. He carried burdens and daily endured privations. He had not where to lay his head. But neither the sorrow nor the trouble was his cross. The cross was not the mere endurance, no matter how patient or heroic, of anything that happened to him. It was his deliberate choice. It was the acceptance of the sin and need of men as his own deepest concern.

How easy it is to avoid that sacrificial attitude to life which constitutes the cross! Take an extreme example—the life of a minister of the gospel. It might be thought that his very profession would commit him to the law of the cross. But that law is perilously easy to avoid. He may be an eloquent preacher, an inspiring friend, an eminently useful man, and yet never deliberately bind a cross of costly service upon his shoulders. He may unconsciously be more intent on building his own reputation than on building new foundations for other people's lives. It is written of Jesus that "he made himself of no reputation." What a subtle test for any minister lies right there! To endure hardship? Yes! To toil terribly? Yes! But to make oneself "of no

reputation"—that for many a minister is the last full measure of devotion! So any of us may have an honored place and do a great deal of good and the meaning of the cross still be written for us in a dead language. Each one of us must translate it for himself into the living speech of experience.

There are two crosses, widely different in character, which have caught the imagination of the world. One is the Southern Cross which hangs in the tropical skies, a wonderful constellation of stars in the form of a cross. It is beautiful but remote. It belongs to heaven only, not to earth, a thing to be gazed on. The other is the Fiery Cross of the Scotch Highlands, a flaming beacon set upon a hill, which called the clans to battle. It blazed forth on earth, vitally and intimately related to the life of every one who saw it. It was a demand for immediate action.

To many the cross of Christ is like the cross of stars in the southern skies. It is a beautiful doctrine set in the heavens, remote from life, regarded with awe, but with no immediate relation to their own life. The cross of Jesus more truly resembles that Fiery Cross of Scotland. It is a personal call for sacrificial ac-

tion. Jesus planted on Calvary a standard that sends out its mighty appeal down across the valley of the years, and calls us to self-effacing love and service in his name and spirit.

The cross interprets God. It saves us from the conception of a more or less satisfied God. That is a conception which we very easily run into and which has a benumbing effect on life. Men easily drift into an idea of a God who is holy, awe-inspiring, but very far away, and, to put it baldly, somewhat leisurely complacent. We often hear the remark quoted, as a counsel to patience, "The trouble with us is that God is not in a hurry and we are." Now, of course, in that statement there is profound truth. A day with the Lord is as a thousand years. But often the remark, as quoted, represents an idea of a God who is not tremendously concerned over to-day's immediate tragedies and woe. Such an idea is shattered at Calvary. As we open our heart to the meaning of the offering of Jesus for the world's sin, we realize that God is in a truly terrible hurry. He is in a divine, heart-broken hurry over sin and the wreck which it brings, an urgency so measureless that he spared

not his own Son. In the Passion of Christ we catch a vision of God infinitely in earnest, and if we live with our eyes open to that vision, it transforms all our thought of him and all our prayers.

When we translate the cross out of the dead language of theory it creates in us a *new attitude of life.* Dr. J. H. Jowett has expressed this change memorably: "When I visit Calvary life is transformed from a picnic into a crusade." The difference between a picnic and a crusade was brought home vividly to many Americans by the war. One army officer as he embarked on the Leviathan with his regiment for France, said, with a smile: "The last time I sailed to Europe on this ship I put in the whole trip complaining about my stateroom. I never thought I'd be glad of a trip in the steerage."

Unless we share the Passion of Christ it is hard to keep life from being some kind of a picnic. A great many people spend their whole trip through life complaining, more or less gently, about their stateroom and trying to have it changed. Their world revolves about themselves. They are pleasant with their fellow passengers, upright and kind, and

yet, when all is said and done, life is essentially a pleasure trip.

A steamship company has recently put out a very alluring advertisement assuring us that we can have "sixteenth-century adventure in twentieth-century comfort." To prove the case the advertisement goes on eloquently:

> When Drake sailed Round-the-World toward the close of the 16th Century he had to rely on sails and favorable winds and his compasses were doubtful. With scanty provisions and inadequate maps his anxieties and privations were indescribable, but his reward was adventure, romance, and an experience to be looked back upon with pride. That was a sixteenth-century cruise.
>
> To-day, over three centuries later, comes Your World voyage, full of the old-time adventure and romance.

That sounds fascinating, but I wonder what Francis Drake and the other sea dogs of the spacious days of the great Elizabeth would think of that proposition. There would be no question about the steam-heated comfort. But what of the adventure and romance? Can you compare for a moment the placid life in a deck chair where the most thrilling event of the day is the dinner gong, with adventure of rounding the Horn in the teeth of a gale? Or the romance of the life and death struggle

with Spain on the high seas, with the great issue at stake of planting a Protestant and English civilization in North America?

"We break the new seas to-day,—
Our eager keels quest unaccustomed waters,
And, from the vast uncharted waste in front,
The mystic circles leap
To greet our prows with mightiest possibilities;
. . . . . .
And, maybe, Golden Days,
Full freighted with delight!
—And wide free seas of unimagined bliss,
—And Treasure Isles, and Kingdoms to be won,
And Undiscovered Countries and New Kin."[1]

No, twentieth-century comfort and sixteenth century adventure are mutually exclusive.

Yet that is the combination in religion which many of us are seeking or even imagine we have made—twentieth-century comfort in an upholstered pew and first-century Christian adventure. Adventure must be made of sterner stuff. Go back to the book of Acts. Ask Stephen. Ask Peter. Ask Paul.

When we embark on life with Christ we join an Expeditionary Force. The one thing that

[1] "New Year's Day and Every Day," John Oxenham, in volume entitled *Bees in Amber*, American Tract Society, publishers. Reprinted by permission.

matters is the goal to which the Captain of our salvation has gone on before, the war of liberation, striking fetters from those whom sin and oppression have bound and making life larger and richer.

This new attitude puts a new frontage to all our relations with people. The line of least resistance for all of us is to reserve ourselves for the congenial group which we make as naturally and as inevitably as a stone dropped in a pool forms a circle. Life has few blessings so rich. The danger of the circle is that its satisfactions may rob us of the only truly Christian attitude to people: "Ourselves your servant, for Jesus' sake." We become critical. Stupid people bore us. Shallow people disgust us. Wicked people repel us. Unless we have a strong corrective, such as only the love of Christ can supply, we soon require that before people can cross the barbed-wire entanglements at the door into our sympathies and friendship, they must pass an intelligence test, or a social test.

The law of the cross as it ruled Jesus' whole life made the most "interesting" persons to him, not the circle of congenial friends, though he loved them dearly, but the people who

needed him most. That is the law which must reign in us.

Once after hearing in Glasgow a famous political leader, a man wrote of him that "he spoke like a man who was happy in having an excellent case, not like a man with a cause." Our fatal defect is that so often we have in our faith merely an excellent *case;* so rarely an all-consuming *cause.*

That difference was beautifully illustrated a short time ago in the quiet act of a physician in the Broad Street Hospital, New York city. Dr. Felix Scardapane, twenty-five years of age, who came to this country as a boy of ten, finding that a patient needed a quart of blood in order to save her life, and there being no one at hand to give it, calmly and quietly called in other doctors to perform the transfusion operation and gave the blood himself. The young physician had a case. But more than that, he had a *cause* that lifted him clear above self-regarding prudence into the realm of sacrifice.

It is when lifted up to that realm of sacrifice that the lighted glory of life comes. He who has experienced it can say with Edna Saint Vincent Millay:

"My candle burns at both ends
It will not last the night!
But ah! my foes and oh! my friends,
It gives a lovely light!"[2]

We never overtake the highest use, or, for that matter, the highest joy of life, until we carry out into the most ordinary relations of life with all sorts of people, something akin to the Christ spirit in Paul, as expressed by Myers.

"Only like souls I see the folk thereunder,
Bound who should conquer, slaves who should be kings.
. . . . . .
Then with a rush the intolerable craving
Shivers throughout me like a trumpet call;
Oh, to save these, to perish for their saving,
Die for their life, be offered for them all!"[3]

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[2] From *Poems*, by Edna Saint Vincent Millay. Reprinted by permission of The Macmillan Company.

[3] From "St. Paul," by F. W. H. Myers. Reprinted by permission of The Macmillan Company.

XIV

WORDS FREQUENTLY MISPRONOUNCED

"Let the words of my mouth . . . be acceptable in thy sight, O Jehovah, my rock, and my redeemer."—Psalm 19. 14

I HAVE on my desk a book with a terrible title. It is *"Seven Thousand Words Frequently Mispronounced."* It is rather disconcerting to know that every time you open your mouth there are seven thousand distinct and separate chances of making yourself ridiculous. It is almost enough to make one take a vow of perpetual silence. Of course looking through the book is reassuring. Most of the words we will never need to pronounce, nor even learn the meaning. If we were to pronounce them very often in the course of our daily speech, our friends would seriously consider sending us to the observation ward to have our sanity tested.

Nevertheless, the title of the book is rather

upsetting. Remembering these seven thousand lurking pitfalls makes us as nervous as the centipede who was able to navigate splendidly until some one asked him which foot went before which. Then he could do nothing but helplessly lie on his back trying to decide.

The words that really bother us, however, are not the long, unusual words. The most troublesome words are the short ones. Nearly all the big things of life are expressed in words of one syllable, in words of three or four letters even. The right use of small words is the greatest of life's lessons, as it is the longest and hardest. The use of long words is a pose of an immature mind. Most of us pass through a stage of growth in which the use of long words is mistaken for a mark of education and culture. It is a normal step in development, and most people pass through it successfully, as they pass through the measles. But some people stick there all their lives like a college student who never gets out of the sophomore class.

The words for really big things are all short. Such words as God, man, child, wife, love, life, sky, home, light, pain, death. Jesus spoke mostly in monosyllables. That was doubtless

one reason why the common people heard him gladly. He dealt with the simple, universal things of life. The Beatitudes, in the King James version of Matthew, contain one hundred and nineteen words. Of these ninety are words of one syllable.

In our use of words it is the right pronunciation of these tremendously big little words which must be mastered. To slur them over when they ought to be emphasized, or to pronounce them flippantly when they should have an accent of reverence, is a serious matter.

Think for a few moments of three short words which are frequently mispronounced and tragically stumbled over. To trip on them, to use them wrongly, is to spoil and blight one's life.

I

The first of these words is *God*. A word of just three letters; a measureless infinity in one little syllable. It is the most important word in the language, the highest reach of human thought. Do you use it as it should be used? How terribly mispronounced the word is when not used with its right significance or in the right frame of mind!

A common mistake is not to pronounce it at all. That is what many people do. God never comes into their thought. They are not immoral. They are not irreligious. They are simply non-religious. They have bowed God out of their universe, sometimes politely, sometimes rudely. Without God in one's daily vocabulary and daily speech the purpose of life is meaningless. It is a story without a plot. It is what Macbeth said it was:

> ". . . a tale
> Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
> Signifying nothing."

Without that word human speech becomes mere chatter. For it is the idea of God which floods all other words with meaning, just as the glitter in every star comes from the sun.

The word "God" is mispronounced when it is used as a profane oath. It is unspeakably sad that the word "God" is rarely or never pronounced by thousands of people except in profanity. Profanity is frequently an indication of an irreverence which runs all through the mind and heart. But it is not always so. Sometimes it is an index only of an utter mental vacancy, when men have no command of

speech to express their meaning and so drop into the stereotyped expressions of profanity which are always a refuge for lazy and feeble minds.

Byron has accurately explained the reason for a great deal of profanity in his line, "He knew not what to say and so he swore." For that reason profanity is not always to be taken at its value to the ear. Many a man has unfortunately fallen into the habit of profanity who is not at heart blasphemous or irreverent. Nevertheless, his words are a continual libel on himself and a social pestilence. A stream of profanity running through a home or an office or a shop is like an open sewer; it contaminates and injures everything it touches.

Many mistakenly pronounce the word God as though he were a million miles away. Their practical attitude toward him is the same as their attitude to the planet Uranus. It has no connection with their daily life. The word "God" does not indicate to them any warm, intimate idea of personal relation.

Many years ago Sir Edwin Arnold described the attitude of the Japanese toward the supernatural as one of "politeness toward possibilities." That attitude cannot be classed as the

exclusive property of Japan. It has been discovered in America also. Voltaire expressed the same common attitude when one day in Paris he lifted his hat as he passed a crucifix. A friend exclaimed in surprise: "I thought you were an infidel! Are you reconciled to God?" Voltaire answered, "We salute, but we do not speak." A great many people have just about as active and vital a faith. They are mutes who occasionally make a vague and general gesture of respect to God. But that is the extent of diplomatic relations.

Jesus taught men how to pronounce the word "God." He pronounced it not in craven fear but always with reverence, with warmth, with eagerness, with love, because he was speaking of and to his father.

Do your lips frame the word rightly? That word is the magic "Open sesame" which unlocks the doors to the treasure house of life.

II

Another word frequently mispronounced is even shorter—the word "I." That is a hard word to use rightly. It is the smallest word in the language, and also the most troublesome. To many people it is the only word. A great

problem in every life is to master the use of the word "I," to give it its proper place in relation to other people and other things.

Professor James H. Robinson says, "The little word 'my' is the most important one in all human affairs and to reckon with it properly is the beginning of wisdom. It has the same force whether it is 'my' dinner, 'my' dog, 'my' house, or 'my' faith, 'my' country, 'my' God."

The mastery of the word "I" is worth a lifetime of patient practice. It is a more difficult art than playing the violin, and we do not expect to master the violin in much short of a life time. Thomas A. Edison is said to have spent two years trying to make the first phonograph pronounce the sound "sh." How much more worth while it is to teach our lips to pronounce this little word "I"—the very pivot of all our speech!

The pitfalls are at two extremes. It is frequently pronounced either as a shout or a murmur. Both are wrong. "I" ought not to be a feeble stammer, a whisper; it ought to have a resonant ring of affirmation. The development of a distinct, self-reliant, independent personality is life's first task. The Ger-

man philosopher Fichte gave a dinner on the day on which his little boy first pronounced the word *"Ich."* It was a landmark well worth marking and celebrating. It is a real birthday for anyone when he can say "I" and have the word represent a resolute personality, not a self-contained unit, but in his place among his fellows. The crowd is a great steam roller for millions of people, flattening out all original qualities, leaving them much like a row of paper dolls all cut from the same pattern. A man's largest contribution to the community is himself at his best. The word "I" should always be more than a murmured echo.

"I" is frequently pronounced too often. Some people talk about themselves so much that you can hear I, I, I, go thumping all the way through their conversation like a riveting machine. The result is just about as melodious. But before you laugh at other people's ridiculous egotism stop a minute in front of the mirror. Watch yourself! How often do you use the word yourself?

How much of your conversation with others consists of "What I said"—"What I did" and "What I thought"? Do you carefully watch the eyes of the people you are talking to, to

see whether they are getting bored? Better try it. Physicians make a blood test to see what the general health of the body is. So one's conversation ought to be tested for the presence of that little word "I." When the personal pronoun comes flocking out of the mouth in great droves it is a sure sign of ingrowing egotism, a terrible disease fatal to real happiness and usefulness.

A few years ago a man spent the summer with a friend on a farm, quite a distance from the railroad. This friend sent for his phonograph and fifty records. On the way up from the little railroad station, the box containing the records slipped from the buckboard wagon and tumbled over into a ravine about a hundred feet below the road. Out of that box of fifty records, forty-nine were broken and one was saved! Now, this man is as patriotic as the average American, but there is one piece of music which he does not care to hear again in his life. That is "The Stars and Stripes Forever." It was the one piece that was saved. They had it morning, noon, and night. They had it for breakfast, dinner, and supper. Finally they broke it in sheer desperation!

It is an awful thing to go through life with

just one record. That is just what is the matter with a large number of people. They have for their mind and heart only one piece—*"Me forever!"* They have it for breakfast, dinner, and supper. They have it morning, noon, and night. And it is no wonder that life gets to be an irritating, tiresome affair, as jarring to themselves as to others.

Once at a dinner party in England when Lord Macaulay was monopolizing the conversation with one of his long monologues, Sydney Smith said, gravely, when he finished, "Macaulay, when I am dead you will be sorry you never heard me talk!" It is possible for us all to resemble Macaulay at least in one particular.

Frequently the little word "I" is pronounced too loudly. It seems to shriek of "my rights," "my importance" and "my money." It is pronounced as though it were written in italics, or a large heavy, black letter a foot high. No matter how beautiful or pleasant the rest of the words may be, if there is sprinkled among them a large handful of big, loud "I's," the result is discord.

The clamorous strife in the world is a hideous discord, but it is all made up of mispro-

nounced "I's" pronounced in a strident shriek of selfishness. A large proportion of humanity is good-natured only when it has its own way. Carlyle expressed this in a characteristic manner in a personal letter: "You may hear it said of me that I am cross-grained and disagreeable. Dinna believe it. Only let me have my own way exactly in everything, with all about me precisely what I wish, and a sunnier or pleasanter creature does not live!"

We are not left to master this difficult lesson in pronunciation alone. We have the divine curriculum of companionship of the Head Master of life's school—Jesus. It is with him and from him that we learn to change the clamorous discord of "I" into the divine harmony of "we."

When Jesus taught his disciples to speak and live he did not stress the word "I." He said, "After this manner pray ye—'*Our* Father.'" The secret of moral advance is to transfer interest in oneself into interest in the kingdom of God. Through his grace in our lives this transfer is made possible.

Ralph Waldo Emerson has expressed truly the Christian relation of the individual to society: "A man should stand among his fellow

men as one coal lies in a fire it has kindled, radiating heat but lost in the general flame."

III

Can you pronounce rightly the word "they"? It is so often mispronounced. That is, it is a little word which is often used to divide the speaker off from the rest of the world, as though it were a picket fence. For one thing it is a word which we use to escape responsibility. We separate ourselves from our fellows and say with an injured air, "Why don't 'they' do this?" or "Why don't 'they' do that?" when, as a matter of fact, it is not "they" who are responsible. It is *"we."* So in politics we blame others for conditions which we ourselves are also responsible. It is so in the church. We ask "Why doesn't the church do this and that?" A much more fruitful, as well as a more humbling, question would be, "How much are we ourselves doing the thing we would like to see others doing?"

But there is a far deeper guilt and shame in the word. It is a separatist word, building walls where none should be erected. It points the finger of exclusiveness and shouts contemptuously, "they," at others who are essen-

tially our blood brothers. It speaks with the accent of snobbishness.

Racial snobbishness says "they" of other races. This is a heyday of the most devilish snobbishness in the world—race snobbishness. A fine example is the myth of so-called "Nordic superiority." As though the world were made for the white man! For a good example of this white snobbery read Lothrop Stoddard's *The Rising Tide of Color* and *The Revolt Against Civilization.* There are many things in these books of great consequence, many problems which are bristling with difficulty. But through them all there speaks the voice of the snob. As long as that feeling prevails, disarmament conferences are an impertinence. We look out on the sad spectacle of Europe to-day, criss-crossed by little fences of national hatred and jealousies. Europe will either rise or fall together.

The same is true of class division. The fundamental grievance of labor is a deeper thing than any matter of hours or wages. It is against the snobbish exclusive attitude which regards the laboring man as "they" instead of a part of "we." As Bishop Gore has well said:

The real cause of unrest among the workers is not a desire for higher wages or shorter hours, but a deep resentment of an attitude toward them on the part of society which seems to them a perpetual insult to their personality.

That is the infamy of the Ku Klux Klan and similar expressions of racial, political, and religious bigotry.

Robert Frost sings, "Something there is that does not love a wall." Something indeed! It is the love of God. Jesus had no use for little back yards. He drew men out of exclusiveness into the main highways and lead them as a marching brotherhood. He broke down middle walls of partition.

In these days when so many class walls are being erected, we must shake the earth anew with the message and spirit of Christ, in whom "there is neither bond nor free, Jew nor Greek, Cythian nor Barbarian, but all one in him." Too many partitions are being erected.

The first words in the Constitution of the United States are "We, the people." The word "we" is a strong band which welds people together. When we draw off in a separate class and learn to say "they" instead of "we," we destroy the feeling of united responsibility

and brotherhood, which is essential to the nation, and to the kingdom of God.

Karle Wilson Baker has put a large section of the teaching of Jesus into three short verses:

"The Lord said,
'Say, "We" ';
But I shook my head,
Hid my hands tight behind my back, and said,
Stubbornly,
'I.'

The Lord said,
'Say, "We" ';
But I looked upon them grimy and all awry—
Myself in all those twisted shapes? Ah, no!
Distastefully I turned my head away,
Persisting,
'They.'

The Lord said,
'Say, "We" ';
And I,
At last,
Richer by a hoard
Of years and years,
Looked in their eyes and found the heavy word
That bent my neck and bowed my head;
Like a shamed schoolboy then I mumbled low,
'We,
Lord.' "[1]

[1] From *Poems*, by Karle Wilson Baker. Reprinted by permission of Yale University Press.

If we learn to pronounce rightly and use rightly these three short words, we need not worry very much about the seven thousand long ones.

XV

THE IMPULSE OF THE RESURRECTION

"She runneth therefore."—John 20. 2

SMALL wonder! The fact of the resurrection struck the mind of Mary with a force that carried her along as though she were a projectile hurled by a gun.

Every few months the newspapers tell us that the most powerful explosive known to man has been invented, an explosive of such terrific force that it will hurl many tons miles through the air (the tonnage and the mileage increasing with each announcement). But that is all just a newspaper exaggeration. For the most explosive force known to man is the impact of the idea of the resurrection of Jesus as it strikes the mind and heart of humanity. It has thrown men by its force twenty-five thousand miles around the globe and has shaken the earth for nineteen centuries.

It is no accident or mere coincidence that in every one of the four Gospels the story of the resurrection is the story of a footrace. When

we bring all the Gospel accounts together we have a swift succession of footraces. The thrill of the glad news, even before the heart was sure it was true, was so overwhelming that it started every one who heard it running.

The finest picture of the first Easter which the imagination has ever conceived is not a picture of the empty tomb or even of the risen Christ. It is a picture of two faces, the faces of Peter and John as they raced to the tomb. Into their strained eyes filled with wonder there seems compressed the trembling hope of the whole world.

Those Easter footraces of the disciples well portray the most significant fact about the resurrection—that it brings a new impulse and movement to human life. When the meaning of the victory of Christ breaks over the mind life is no longer a walk. It leaps and bounds.

Great good news simply cannot walk. The word "Marathon" suggests to us not so much the battle in Greece as the runner who sped forty miles with the news, well content to drop dead at the end, if he could but gasp out the word, "Victory!"

Our hearts rush out to grasp the assurance of endless life which the resurrection of Christ

brings. When Mary made her way to the sepulcher, still engulfed in the gloom of Calvary, the startling wonder of the empty tomb quickened her step. "She runneth therefore," the Gospel of John tells us. How could she help it? So the heart leaps to meet the news of Christ's victory over death.

One of the traditions of the Cathedral of Winchester in England is the story of how the news of the battle of Waterloo was first received. It came by a sailing ship to the south coast of England and by signal flags was wig-wagged to London. When the message reached Winchester, the signals on top of the cathedral began to spell the message, "W-e-l-l-i-n-g-t-o-n d-e-f-e-a-t-e-d," and then fog descended and hid the signals from view. The sad news of the incomplete message went on to London. When the message was read, "Wellington defeated," the whole country was in despair. But after a while the fog lifted and the signals on the Winchester cathedral were still at work spelling out the complete sentence, "W-e-l-l-i-n-g-t-o-n d-e-f-e-a-t-e-d t-h-e e-n-e-m-y." The thrilling news raced across the land and lifted all hearts out of gloom into joy. "Wellington defeated the enemy!"

So the heavy gloom of Calvary fled before the victory of the resurrection. Out of the dark shadows of the tomb our hearts leap up at the news of victory. The resurrection puts the seal of reality on the great central truth of Jesus—that we are children of God, with a personal infinite, eternal value for him which shall never be lost.

It is in that truth of God's Fatherhood that we find the abiding reason for faith in immortality. If you are actually God's child—what *other* can ever conceivably take your place? It is perfectly reasonable that God might create another world—another universe, to replace this one. But what could replace a *child?* Susanna Wesley had nineteen children. That is a good many even for so notoriously competent a mother. It is highly probable that she got their clothes mixed on occasion. But do you imagine she ever got *them* mixed? Did Samuel sort of fade into John and was Charles a misty blending of both? Would she have cared little if one slipped out of her life, finding ready comfort in the fact that she had eighteen left? If you have any doubt about it, read her letters to her children. Each one had his own individual place that none of the

others, that not all eighteen together could fill. A child is unique and irreplaceable. How much more must the Fatherhood of God imply an eternal place in the father's heart for each child!

The impulse of Easter puts a new momentum in life here on earth, for it puts a new value in it. The largest message of Jesus is not to tell us *how long* life lasts but *what* it is. Jesus did not come back to tell us that life goes on; he came to do far more than that. He came to tell us what real life is, here, there, or anywhere. Eternal life is not quantity of life but quality of life. It is here and now that we may live in the power of an endless life. Here and now we may find fellowship with God and a share in his great onward-moving purposes.

Dorothy Canfield sets this truth in a memorable sonnet:

"We call this time, and gauge it by the clock
  Deep in such insect cares as suit that view,
  As whether dresses fit, what modes are new,
And where to buy and when to barter stock—
We think we hold, based on some Scripture rock,
  Claims on immortal life to press when due,
  Imagining some door between the two,
Our deaths shall each, with presto change, unlock.

But this is also everlasting life:
On Monday in the kitchen, street or store
We are immortal, we, the man and wife,
Immortal now, or shall be never more,
Immortals in immortal values spend
These lives that shall no more begin than end."[1]

Eternal life is self-forgetfulness in the great purposes of God. This new understanding of life strikes from our limbs the ball and chain of slavery to self. It raises the bed-ridden will to new power and bids us walk in the name of Christ.

Into our life to-day—if we will bare our heart and mind to it, this amazing explosive of the resurrection will bring a resilient bound and leap. Bliss Perry says "Easter begins, like all deep things, in mystery and it ends, like all high things, in a great courage." It transforms human relations from the acquaintanceship of a short railway journey soon to be ended to a fellowship of eternal value. "The tomb is not a blind alley; it is a thoroughfare."

A recent critic has playfully recorded the effect which reading H. G. Wells has upon him: "No matter how discouraging things seem when I pick up a Wells' book, or how

[1] From *The Real Motive*, by Dorothy Canfield. Reprinted by permission Henry Holt and Company.

averse I may be to launching out on a crusade of any sort, I always end by walking with a firm step to the door (feeling, somehow, that I have grown quite a bit taller and much handsomer) and saying, quietly: 'Meadows, my suit of armor, please; the one with a chain-mail shirt and a purple plume.' This, of course, is silly, as any of Mr. Wells' critics will tell you. It is the effect that he has on irresponsible, visionary minds. But if all the irresponsible, visionary minds in the world became sufficiently belligerent through a continued reading of Mr. Wells, or even of the New Testament, who knows but what they may become just practical enough to take a hand at running things? They couldn't do much worse than the responsible, practical minds have done, could they?"

In a very high and reverent sense the gospel of Jesus and the resurrection send men into warfare with a quickened heart. At his "All Hail!" we call for our suit of armor and leap into the fight. We know that our labor is not vain in the Lord. He has overcome the world, and his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom. It is tremendously worth while to fight against any odds, for life is stronger than death, love

is stronger than hate, truth is stronger than lies.

"Where does your great river go?" David Livingstone would frequently ask the natives of the interior of Africa, pointing to the Congo. "It is lost in the sands," they always answered him. They had never seen the sea to which the river surely and irresistibly made its way. "Where does all your labor and effort go?" we frequently ask ourselves. And in moods of discouragement and fatigue the answer comes, "It is lost in the sands!" The victory of Jesus brings to our ears the roar of the distant sea, the assurance that our labor is not lost or void but is joined to the divine power of righteousness destined to conquer the world.

With this full conception of eternal life in mind, what a pathetic thing it is to see so many people to-day trying to spell out its meaning with a ouija board! The worst defect of spiritualism is its utter lack of any moral quality, any power to quicken or ennoble life. Even were any trustworthy evidence for survival adduced (which has not yet appeared), what a pitiable fragmentary substitute spiritualism would be for the fullness of a Christ-

filled life! Perhaps the most trenchant indictment of the present spiritualistic craze has come from Jerome K. Jerome, to whom we already owe a powerful portrayal of the spirit of Christ in modern life in *The Passing of the Third Floor Back.* He says:

> With gladness would I accept a new religion "founded upon human reason on this side and upon spirit inspiration upon the other." But what are we offered? On this side the darkened room, the ubiquitous tambourine, the hired medium (sometimes "detected in trickery" and sometimes not) now tied into a chair and now locked up in an iron cage; the futile messages, proved frequently to be "concoctions," vague prophecies of the kind that we can read in any *Old Moore's Almanac.* These things do not appeal to my reason.
>
> Where is this "new religion"? What does spiritualism preach? Or is it content with the world as it is? I take the last five years. Has spiritualism done anything—is it doing anything—to help men to be less brutal, less hypocritical, less greedy? Has it done anything—is it doing anything—to lessen the appalling wickedness that is threatening, like some foul weed, to poison the whole earth?
>
> What has spiritualism done—what is it doing—to help mankind to recover its sense, its manhood, to rescue its soul from being withered by lust and passion?

That ethical and spiritual test is fatal. But it is just there that the largest meaning of Christ's victory over death is found. We go

back to life from the open tomb with a new exhilaration and a new power for daily living.

A new thrill of movement comes into life as we return to it with the experience of the risen Christ in our hearts. The news is so great and glad that we must run to communicate it. The same irresistible impulse that set the disciples' feet flying along the road puts every life which discovers the meaning of the resurrection into swift and exuberant motion.

The disciples running back from the empty tomb to carry the news were the first of an endless succession of runners all with the same trembling joy in their hearts and the same free leap in their feet. Paul meets his risen Lord and runs with the news the rest of his life. The prison chains on his feet were never strong enough to bind his spirit. We find him writing from his little cell about "whensoever I go to Spain"—building castles in Spain of adventure for Christ in what was then the farthest limit of the world. Following the three Marys who first discovered the empty tomb and ran with the joyous news, there came along centuries later three other Marys, worthy to follow in their train, Mary Moffat, Mary Livingstone, and Mary Slessor,

who had met their risen Lord and ran joyfully along the long, dark trail that led into the center of Africa to tell the overwhelming news. Or, to mention only one more among millions, James Chalmers received such an impetus from his vision of the risen Christ that he leaped to the end of a long road that led to the savage island of the South Seas, New Guinea, well content that, like the runner from Marathon, he could give his life to carry the word, "Victory!"

What does the Christian faith of immortality mean to us to-day? Surely, it must mean such a fresh amazement at the victory of Christ over sin and death that a sober, dignified, leisurely walk will not be possible. We must break into an apostolic stride, with Peter and Mary and John, and with eager heart and flying feet carry to the last and farthest of God's children the news of the eternal victory of Christ.

XVI

IN A WORLD OF TANGENTS

"In whom all things hold together."—Colossians 1. 17 (Moffatt's Translation).

SAINT PAUL'S conception of Christ as the one "in whom all things hold together" is a timely gospel for a world which is splitting apart.

It is an arresting interpretation of the significance of Christ. The words "hold together" are a marginal reading, one of those searchlights set in the margin of the Bible which throw a flood of white light over a page. The reading, "In him all things consist," is more familiar, but the word "consist" has lost most of its picturesque, primary meaning. The large conception which Paul had of Christ strikes the imagination with greater force when more literally rendered, as by Moffatt, "In whom all things cohere," or "Through him the universe is a harmonious whole."

This conception of Christ as the cohesive force of the world acquires larger significance as the years pass. Never, surely, did it appear as a more timely and needed gospel than to-day. We live to-day in a world of tangents. Innumerable smaller and larger groups, forces, and nations are going off on tangents, pulling in their own direction, away from the center of common welfare. The war has affected the world, naturally and inevitably, like a high explosive shell, scattering fragments in all directions, and filling the sky with head-on collisions.

A fascinating speculation of our childhood days was, "What would happen if gravitation should suddenly cease to work?" It was an interesting problem for the imagination to picture what a hurly-burly it would make when each person and building and object was shot off the earth into endless space at its particular tangent. We can form some idea of a world without gravitation merely by looking out of the window at almost any section of a distracted world. The spirit of Christ, which is the spirit of love, is the cohesive power, the gravitation of the moral world, and when that power ceases to work, an anarchy

of turmoil, in more or less degree, between individuals, classes, and groups is the result.

The war, of course, was the stupendous demonstration of a world where the necessary cohesive power failed; but the demonstration did not end at the armistice or the signing of the treaty. Nor has it ended four years later. It has merely developed new varieties. It merely spread out into some new forms. The forces which pull apart, which split the harmonious whole which is God's goal for the world, are still rampant and must be subdued by the grip of Him in whom all things hold together.

The need and the power of the cohesive force of love in all human associations are seen vividly in a field near and familiar to all of us—the family. Few things are more exquisite torture to the nerves than a piano badly out of tune, where every note goes in for self-determination without reference to the harmony or discord it makes with the other notes. A family not bound together by love is like a piano out of tune. It makes a jangling discord in which the strident notes of "I" and "me" sound shrilly. The selfish notes of "my time," "my rights," "my room" are never

melted into the harmony of "our home." The beautiful melody of "Home, Sweet Home," can never be rendered by hearts that are tuned to self.

Selfishness is a dissolving power in one's personal character as well as in society. The saving of a soul means salvation from the dissolving influence of a selfish life. Selfishness is sure to issue in a dissolution of moral energy, in what is significantly named a *dissolute* moral character.

The same crying need of a cohesive power sufficient to hold things together runs through all the wider relationships of life. A profiteer is an individual who has gone off on a selfish tangent, pulled away from the center of the common rights. He is a disintegrating force in society, as all selfishness is disintegrating.

And what a desperate need the world of industry has for him in whom all things hold together! It is an arena of clashing forces. At one extreme is the Bourbon whose one answer to all the demands of the workers is, "Shoot them down!" At the other extreme is the radical whose equally simple formula is, "Blow them up!" Even where the positions taken are not nearly so extreme, in multitudes

of cases, both employer and employee have moved off on a tangent of selfish advantage unrelated to common welfare or justice. We have many capitalists who cling to their advantages, however gained, untouched by any broad considerations of social welfare. And we have the revolutionists, who in the valor of ignorance and the ardor of hatred, like a blind Samson, would topple over the pillars which hold up civilization. We of this amazing age of mechanical progress are nevertheless of all men most miserable if in this splitting world of industry we cannot bring to bear the spirit of Christ, and fill industrial relations with both justice and love. He alone, amid all the bristling occasions of discord, can hold men in harmony.

As we move out to that larger field of international relationships, so baffling and alarming to-day, the aching need of an Ordainer of harmony intensifies. As a boy I used to wonder what "the European concert," of which we read so much, was really like. Since 1914 we have had ample opportunity to find out. The European concert, that balanced orchestration of the hates and powers of nations, was a rendering of the Death March by an orchestra

of Hell, with instruments varying all the way from the shrill piccolo of the machine gun to the bassoon of a forty-two-centimeter cannon. Algernon West, in his *Reminiscences,* tells of an American lady who, on her arrival in London, wrote to her embassy that she was passionately fond of music and desired to know what opportunities would be open to her to gratify her taste. She said that in particular she wished to attend the "European concert"—provided that it was an entertainment to which she could safely take her daughter! It was emphatically not that! It was *not* an entertainment to which nations could safely take their sons, though they did eventually take them by the millions, to perish to the screaming oratorio of hate.

H. G. Wells, in his novel *The Time Machine,* written many years ago, drew a fantastic imaginary picture of the havoc wrought in the world by the invention of a devilish machine which could counteract the power of gravitation. The war translated that wild fancy into hideous fact. It disclosed such a machine. It was militarism controlled by greed, by national selfishness, by hate. That machine counteracted the power of moral

and spiritual gravitation which is the Christian spirit of brotherhood and love.

To-day the situation is hardly relieved at all. The danger spots of the world are greatly increased in number, the zones of friction lengthened. A recent traveler through Europe says it ought to be called "The United Hates of Europe."

Fires of hatred merely banked, not put out; national ambitions running at right angles to one another; the grave enigmas of Russia, China, Turkey, and India—what earthly power or wit can hold these in harmony? He alone who can draw the hearts of men, all men, with the divine compulsion of love.

"Why don't the stars hit each other?" asked a little seven-year-old of his father. Why not? It is a pertinent question. For just one reason. They are all related to one center. They all feel and obey the pull of the sun, in whom all things hold together. As they are adjusted to that one center, they move in harmonious adjustment to one another. There is none other name given in heaven or on earth whereby men must be saved from the disintegration of clashing selfishness but Christ. Only as men come into obedience to him do

they work out a lasting harmony with one another.

It is interesting to note the expedients brought out by those who deny that Christianity is an effective means of peace. In many instances it is a case of "throwing the Bible away and quoting from memory." Bertrand Russell says that "Christ's teachings are wholly inadequate to the situation" (securing peace), and goes on naïvely to add, "Our only hope is to *diminish the impulses that center around possession.*" What an effective summary of the ethics of Jesus! Could any labored treatise do much better as an expression of the core of Christian teaching on wealth than this incidental statement? Yet this bit of wisdom is adduced in support of the argument that "Christ's teachings are wholly inadequate." Try as he may to avoid it, Mr. Russell has a slightly reminiscent sound!

This is no time for Christians to tolerate an apologetic mood. It is time for a commanding assertion of a Christ who is the world's unifying force. But a proclamation of that unifying Christ must be more than an assertion to be commanding. It must be an incarnation. Into personal, industrial, and inter-

national relations we must carry that spirit of love and of justice and service which is

"The golden cord
Close binding all mankind."

The rays of the sun are invisible until they strike upon some object. The unifying power of Christ, if it is to be recognized and yielded to, must be made visible in lives that catch and embody it.

XVII

A MATTER OF MORALE

"Strengthened with might by his spirit in the inner man."—Ephesians, 3. 16

THE Great War has plowed deep furrows through our daily speech. It has put many new words into universal circulation. Many of these words have already been worn smooth by the thoughtless turning of human phonographs. But some will remain in our vocabulary as landmarks of the great struggle.

The word "morale" will probably have the permanent significance of marking a new valuation of the spiritual factors of life. The emergence of "morale" in the world's thought and speech records the significant discovery that in the greatest massing of material things the world has ever seen the deciding factors were not things, not steel and TNT, but *spirit.*

Of course the war emphasized the power of material things. The ironclad tank, crashing

its way like a Juggernaut breathing out fiery death, was a fit symbol of material might. But behind the steel and against the steel was something greater—spirit. The force that welded the scattered and diverse fragments of our nation into a unified force was in the souls of men.

This lesson, which has sunk deep, has large meaning for that war that never ends, the campaign of the Son of God that stretches out along a grim fighting line around the earth, against the strongholds of night and sin, to establish his kingdom of righteousness, joy and peace. If our thinking is Christlike in pattern and dimensions, it bears on the establishment of the Kingdom. We seek the deepening and enrichment of our spiritual life, not for the sake of nursing what Milton calls "a fugitive and cloistered virtue, unexercised and unbreathed, that never sallies out and sees her adversary," but to develop the morale of the Kingdom. For morale is to the mind and spirit what health is to the body: it is both fighting power and staying power.

We can do nothing of more far-reaching effect than to understand afresh and reestablish in our lives those inner conditions of spirit

and mind which will give us both thrust and staying power in the work of the Kingdom.

1. *A knowledge of the aims of the war.* Recent experience has emphasized how fundamental to the vigor of any fighting force is a knowledge of the aims of the war. Our government conducted a massive educational campaign in the army on "Why We Are at War," because it realized that a man who knew what he was fighting for and felt the cause individually was literally a superman. He was a soldier plus. He was worth anywhere from a man and a half to five men. The church needs nothing so much as "supermen" who feel Christ's cause as their own. A great many members of the church have never keenly realized that any war is going on. A woman in London passed through the five years of the war without ever having heard of it. She was over one hundred years of age and in order to save her anguish her family managed to keep her in entire ignorance of the conflict. All the time that Zeppelins were dropping bombs over the city and the very guns at the front were audible, she was blissfully living on in the world before the war.

Many have just about the same knowledge

of the campaigns of Jesus Christ now waged in the world. Many Christians have not enlisted for anything but a rest camp. They throng the bases in uniform but they do not go up into the line. They are "absent without leave" both from heavy firing and heavy hauling. May we not help to recover for ourselves and the church a burning knowledge of Christ's aims, of that love of God which reaches out to the least, the last, and the lost, and seeks to redeem every barren tract of life?

Fortified with such an intense knowledge, we make our own the battle prayer of Richard Watson Gilder:

"Lead me, yea, lead me deeper into life,
This suffering, human life wherein thou liv'st
And breathest still, and holdst thy way divine.
'Tis here, O pitying Christ, where thee I seek,
Here where the strife is fiercest; where the sun
Beats down upon the highway thronged with men,
And in the raging mart, O! deeper lead
My soul into the living world of souls
Where thou dost move."[1]

John Drinkwater, in his play, "Abraham Lincoln," pictures Lincoln alone in his room

[1] From *Poems of Richard Watson Gilder*. Reprinted by permission of Houghton, Mifflin Company, publishers.

in the White House at a moment of great crisis in the Civil War, looking intently at a large map of the United States which hangs on the wall. Into that look is concentrated his intense love for the Union and his passionate desire to preserve it whole. Under the weight of the task and responsibility he sinks to his knees in prayer. As one feels the genuine emotion of the scene, the thought arises, What if we could look on the map of our town, our country, the world, with something of the same throbbing love, the same desire to save? Suppose we looked out on our neighborhood and realized the objectives which Jesus Christ has there, the things he is trying to do right there, for its men and women, its children, its life. Or, sending our eyes and heart on a wider circuit, suppose we looked out on the world Christ died to save with an eagerness akin to his, making our own his great aims and desires for the defrauded and unprivileged children of God! Would it not bring into our hearts a new animation and into our lives a new fighting morale for the Kingdom?

2. *The impulse of a real experience.* Fighting and staying power in the soldier is built out of an experience of genuine love of country.

Rupert Brooke has sung that impulse of a great love in immortal words:

> "If I should die, think only this of me,
> That there's some corner of a foreign field
> That is forever England."

The spirit that breathes in these words is the spirit that creates fortitude in the kingdom of God. How far will a bullet go before the pull of earth draws it down? It all depends on the force of the explosion which sped it on its way. How far is a life going to move in the service of God before weariness and opposition overcome it? It all depends on the impact of the initial experience which set it in motion. The lasting dynamic empowering the Christian is the impulsion that arises from experiencing the priceless treasure that is found in Jesus Christ. Does the momentum of our experience of Christ still remain as a real propulsive force in our lives? What does he mean to us? Think of the five great things Christ meant to John—the way, truth, life, light, and grace. What is our personal appreciation of these things? Out of our own experience does Christ loom up as the all-inclusive, indispensable need of men?

Such an experience is motive power. The church is much occupied to-day, and rightfully, with programs. But programs are only tracks. The best-laid tracks will never move anything. Tracks are only a mockery without the motive power of an experience of God which will move the world's loads.

3. *Faith in the Power behind us.* The spirited morale of many a division of our army in action in France was built out of the knowledge that back of it was a line of great guns belching forth a barrage; back of the guns was another line of reserves; back of the reserves was the embattled might of a great nation. Faith shapes courage to a fighting edge in the enterprise of the Kingdom, a faith that behind our best strength and wisdom are the inexhaustible resources of God. When that faith clouds over, our personal momentum slackens. But the faith that thrusts men out to action is not a vague opinion about God which hovers around the edges of their minds like a Newfoundland fog. It is a coherent and vital belief in the presence and activity of God in his own universe, a loving, serving God who is willing for the world the goals revealed by Christ. We can make no greater contribution

to our generation than to carry by contagion that faith into the minds and hearts of men.

A survivor of Andersonville prison in the Civil War has told of the efforts of the men to relieve one another's sufferings which went on during long months, efforts deeply appreciated, but of limited help. But one night a newly captured prisoner moved from group to group with the news that Sherman had taken Atlanta and was on his way to the coast. That news was an electric thrill which transformed the world for every one of the prisoners. Despair and even malignant sickness were carried away by the shock of the glad faith that an outside force was irresistibly moving to their release.

It is such a recreation of life that a great faith born into the heart brings about. To preserve such a faith in our own hearts and to carry it to a baffled world is our supreme service to-day.

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